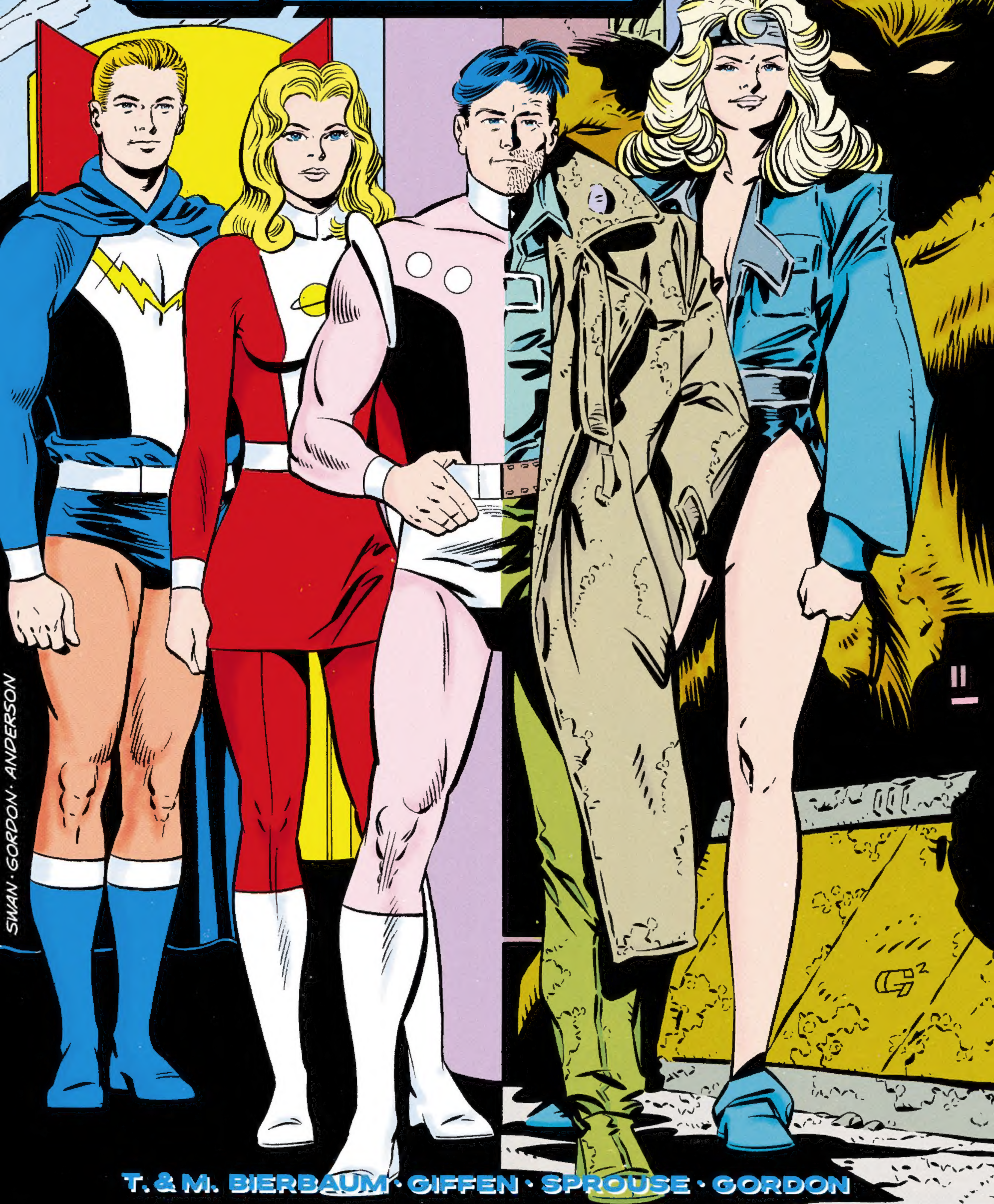


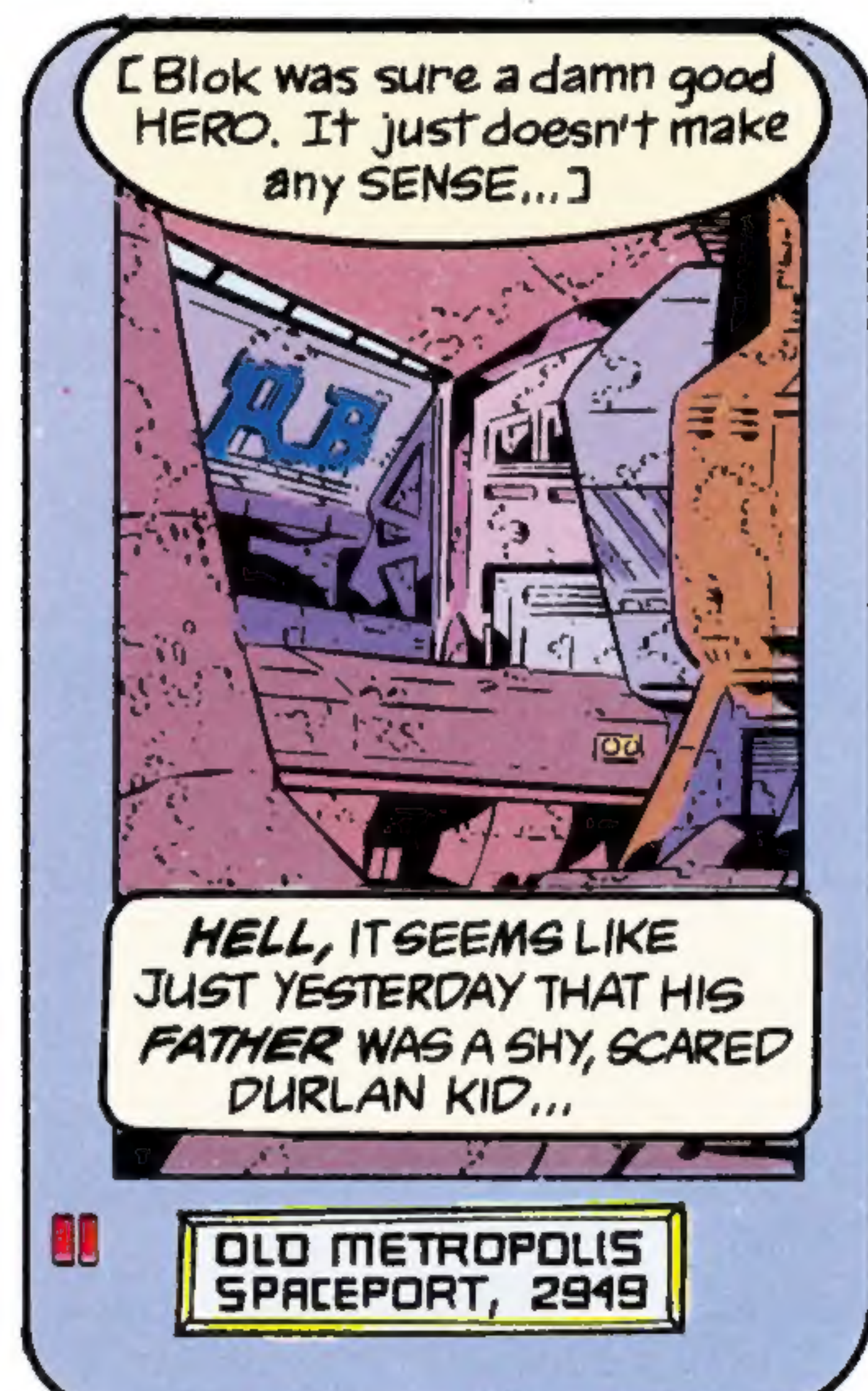
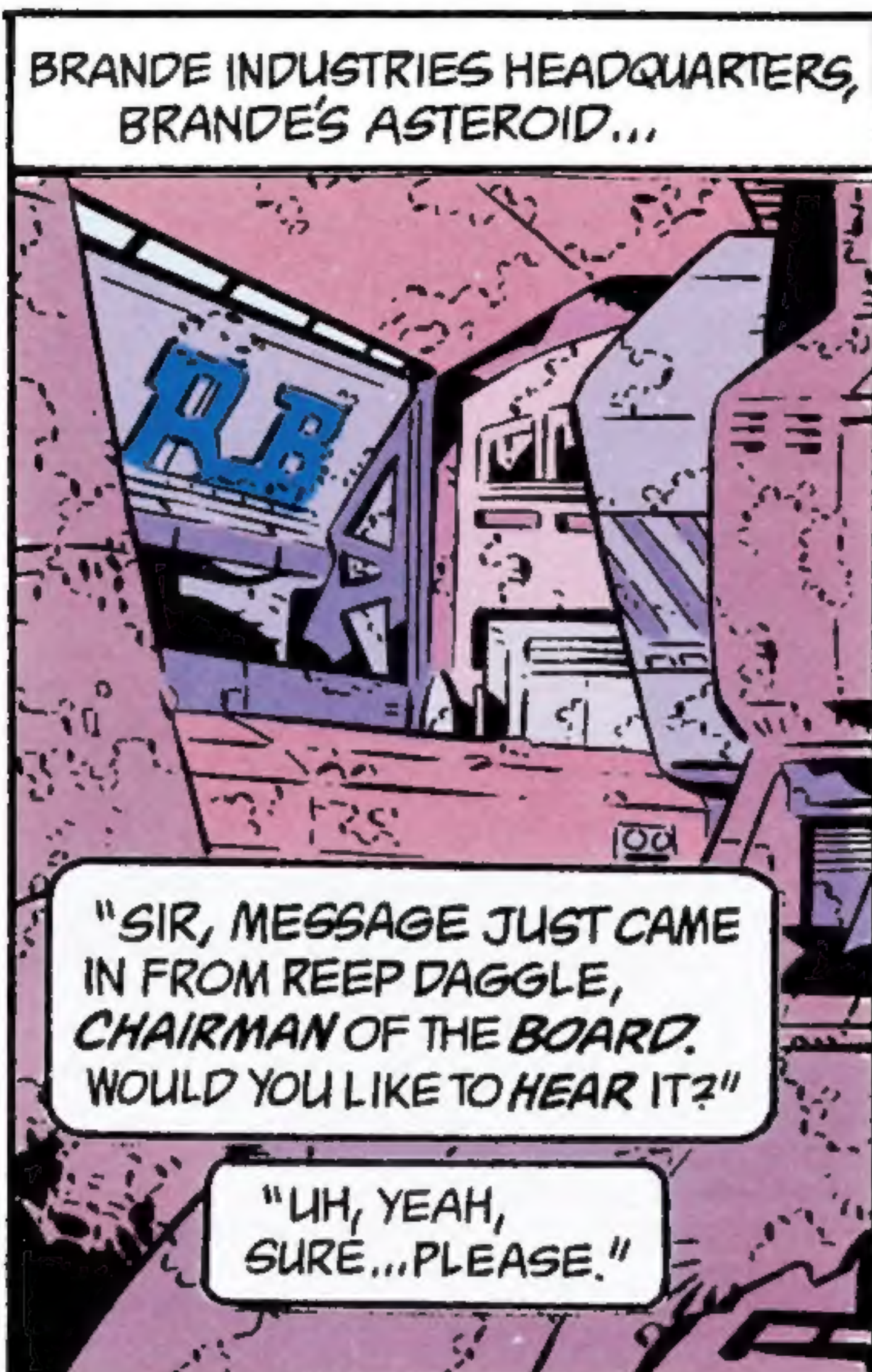

LEGION OF
SUPER-HEROES
8
JUN 90

THE ORIGIN OF THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES



SWAN · GORDON · ANDERSON

T. & M. BIERBAUM · GIFFEN · SPROUSE · GORDON



REEP'S COME A LONG, LONG WAY--
BUT THEN, SO DID HIS FATHER...

HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S BEEN 45 YEARS...
MAN, THAT TAKES ME BACK!

IT WAS AT THE OLD METROPOLIS
SPACEPORT. GOD, I HAVEN'T THOUGHT
ABOUT "THE OLD CATHEDRAL" IN YEARS!

IT WAS JUST LIKE THE
REST OF METROPOLIS
BACK THEN -- PROUD,
OLD, AND DYING.

I, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS YOUNG,
STUPID, AND **IDEALISTIC**...

BOY, THOSE WERE **CRAZY**
DAYS--WORKING ON THE DOCKS,
TRYING TO EARN THAT DIPLOMA
ON MY BREAKS...

THOSE **MONSTERS**! MARLA,
YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!

TAYLA!

AH, TAYLA--I THOUGHT
SHE'D NEVER NOTICE
ME. AND NOW SHE WAS
ACTUALLY TALKING
TO ME!

WHO CARED? WHATEVER
SHE WANTED WAS **FINE**
WITH ME...

THE INHUMAN
BEASTS! THEY'RE
TORTURING THAT
POOR DURLAN!



LET THE ROTTEN
SHAPE-SHIFTER
HAVE IT!

A DURLAN! WHERE'D
HE COME FROM?!

I DON'T KNOW!
HE JUST POPPED UP
OUTTA NOWHERE!
WHAT DIFFERENCE
DOES IT MAKE?

NONE.

I'LL GET
THE S.P.S.--YOU
STOP THEM!

STINKIN'
DURLAN!

TAYLA WAS RIGHT, AND THERE WAS NO WAY
I WAS GOING TO DISAPPOINT HER...

OKAY,
EVERYBODY,
BACK OFF!
LEAVE 'IM
ALONE!

WHAT?!

YA GOTTA BE
KIDDIN'!

GETTA LOADA
THIS...!

YOU HEARD
ME--BACK OFF!

SCHOOLBOY'S
LOOKING FOR
TROUBLE-- AND
HE'S COME TO
THE RIGHT
PLACE!

HE'S HAD
THIS COMIN'
FOR A LONG
TIME!

HA-HA!

AAUUGH!

POW!

DAMN
YOOOO!

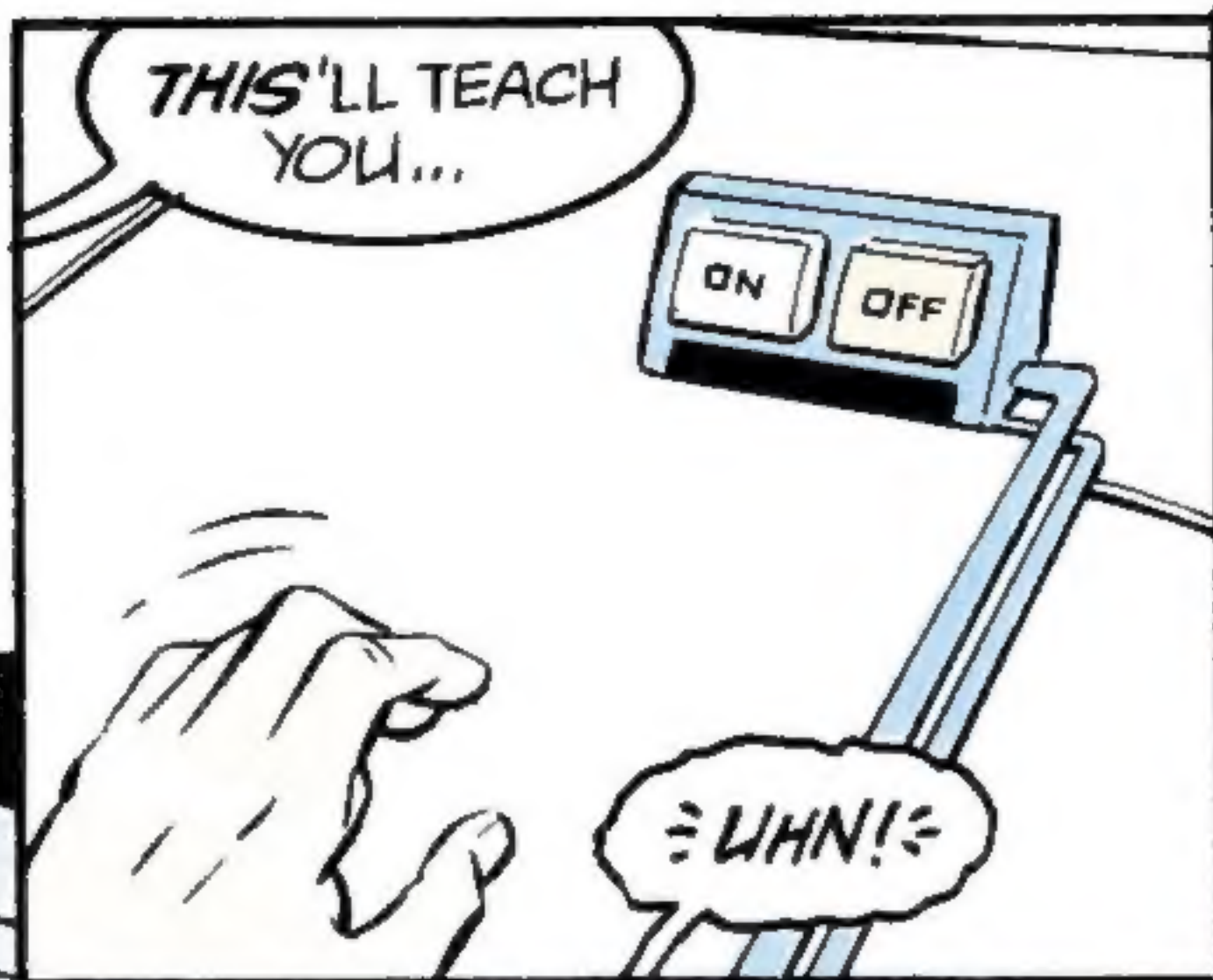
THIS GUY'S
MORE FUN THAN
THE DURLAN!

PTHOOOM

UHHH...!

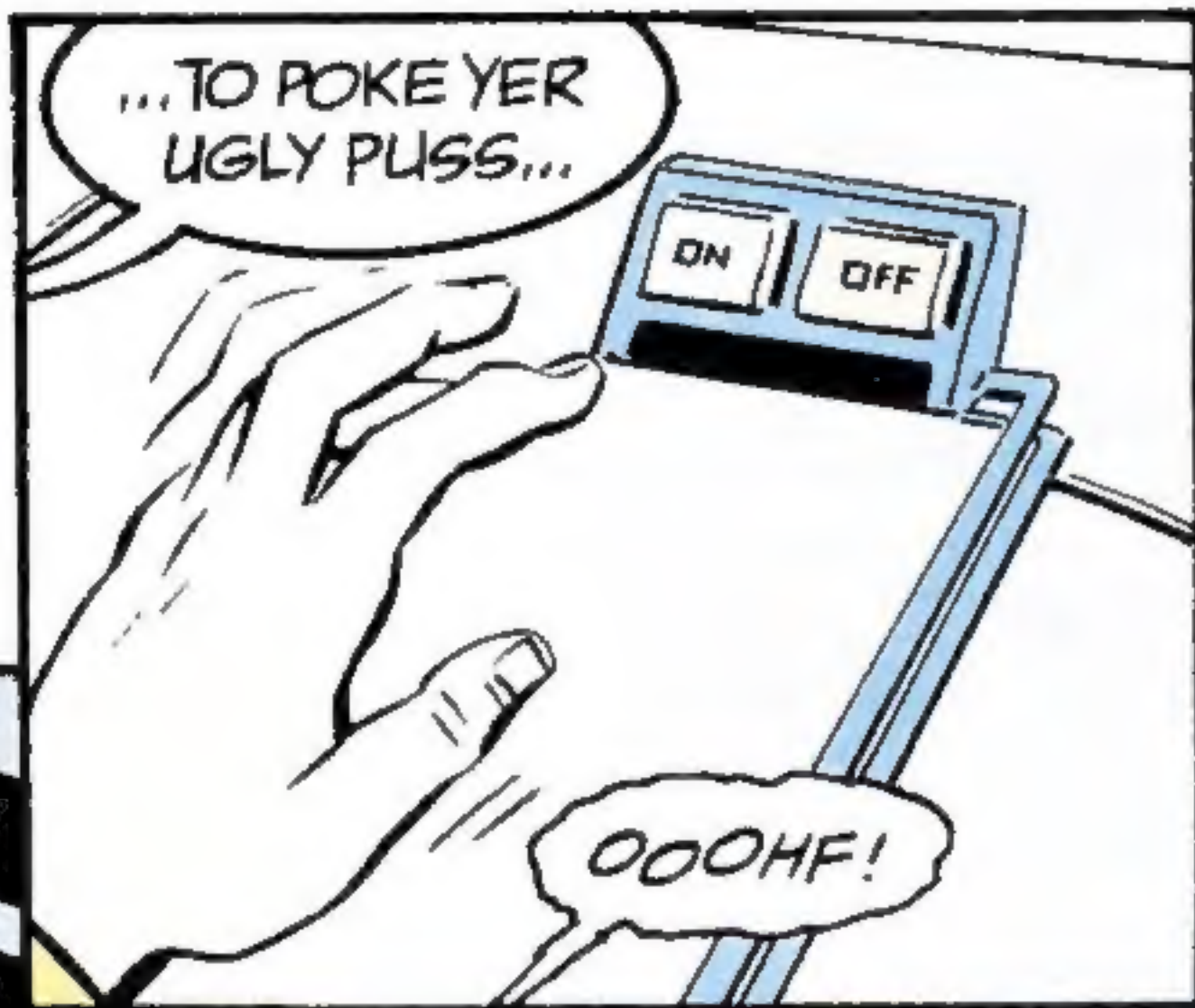
THUNK!

BOY, WAS TAYLA GOING
TO BE IMPRESSED...



THIS'LL TEACH YOU...

UHN!



...TO POKE YER UGLY PUSS...

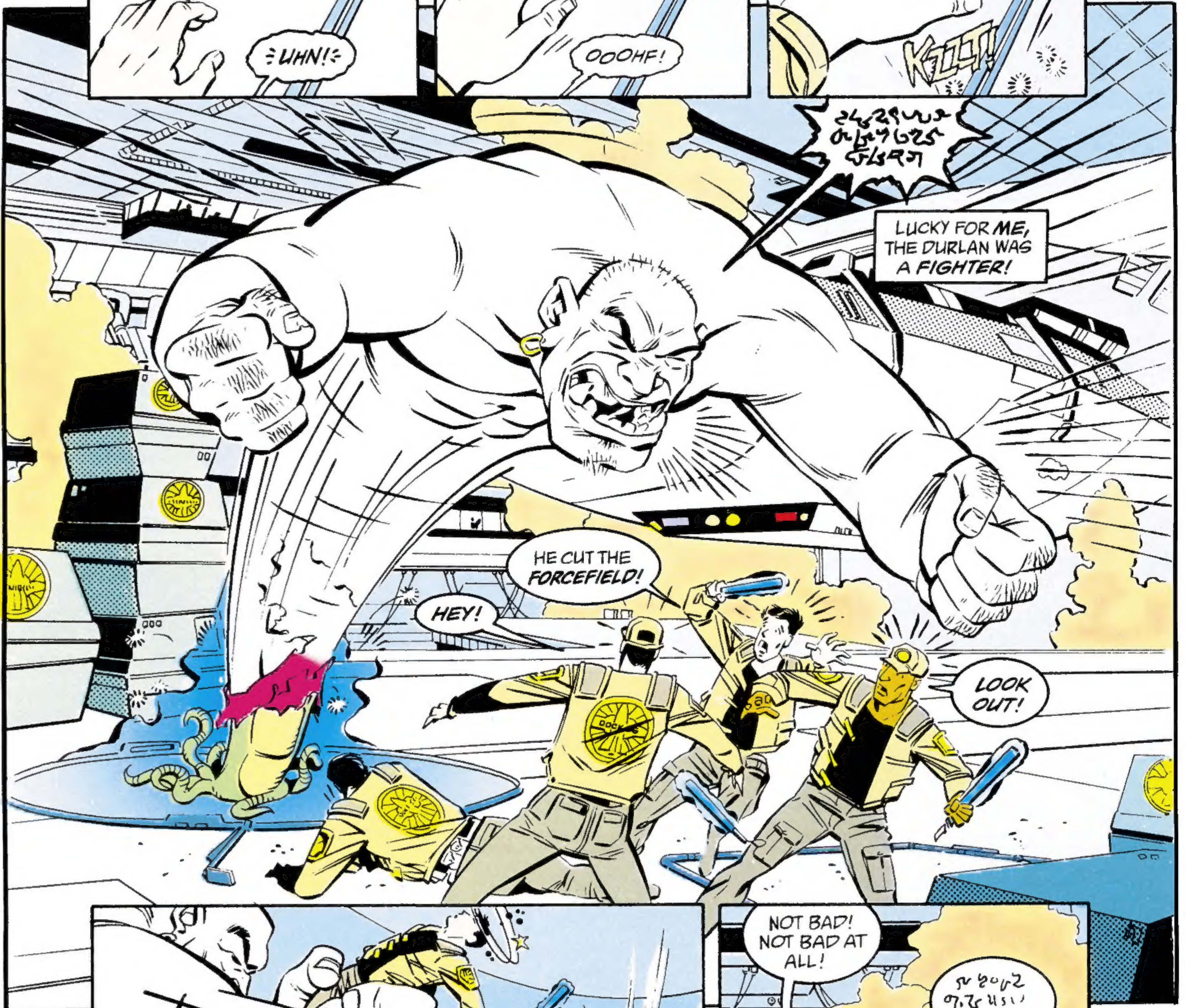
OOOHF!



...INTO OTHER PEOPLE'S--

KLIK

KLIK!



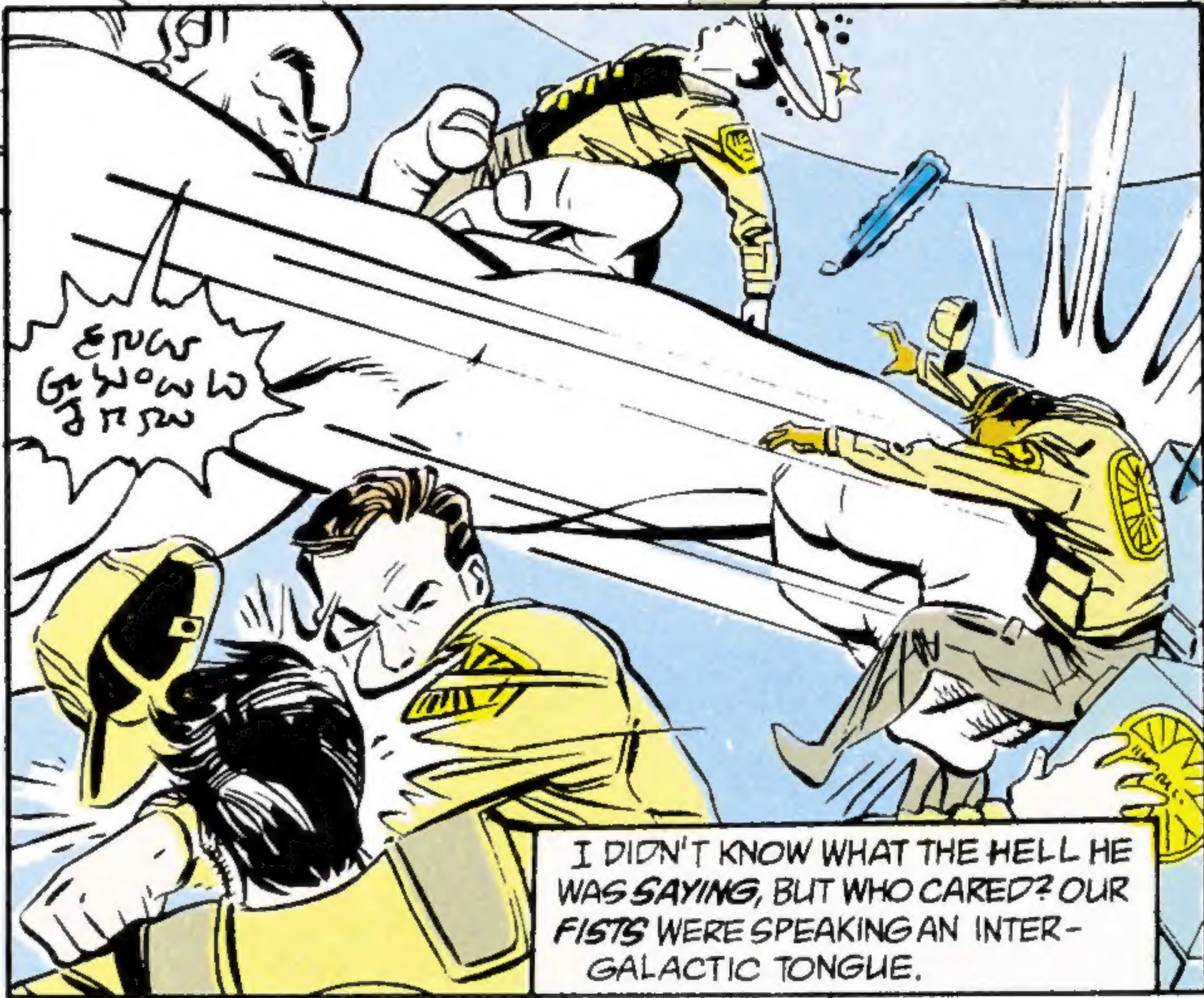
2429002
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LUCKY FOR ME,
THE DURLAN WAS
A FIGHTER!

HE CUT THE
FORCEFIELD!

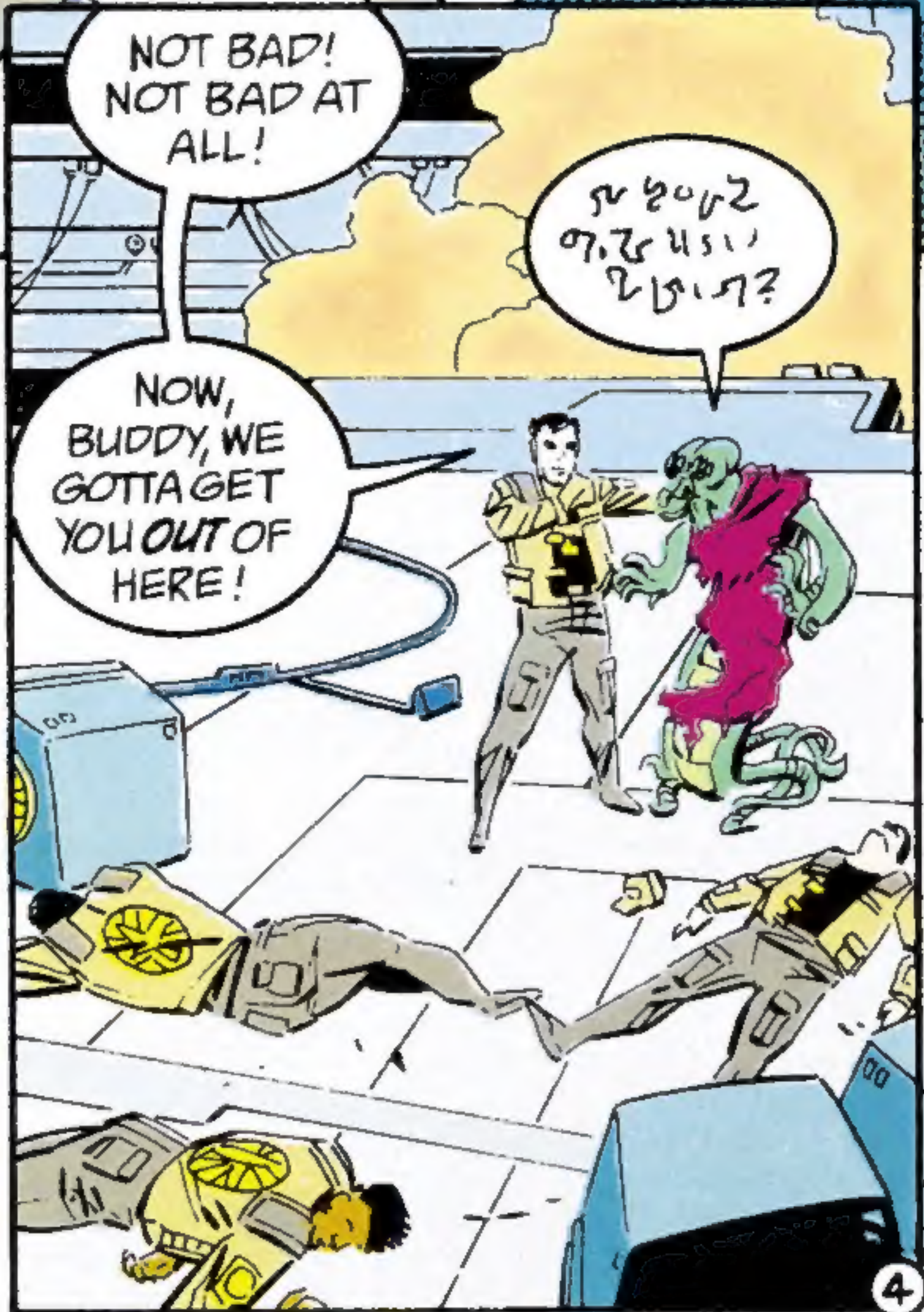
HEY!

LOOK
OUT!



8P0W
62W0W
3P2W

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL HE
WAS SAYING, BUT WHO CARED? OUR
FISTS WERE SPEAKING AN INTER-
GALACTIC TONGUE.



NOT BAD!
NOT BAD AT
ALL!

2429002
0154625
51597

NOW,
BUDDY, WE
GOTTA GET
YOU OUT OF
HERE!



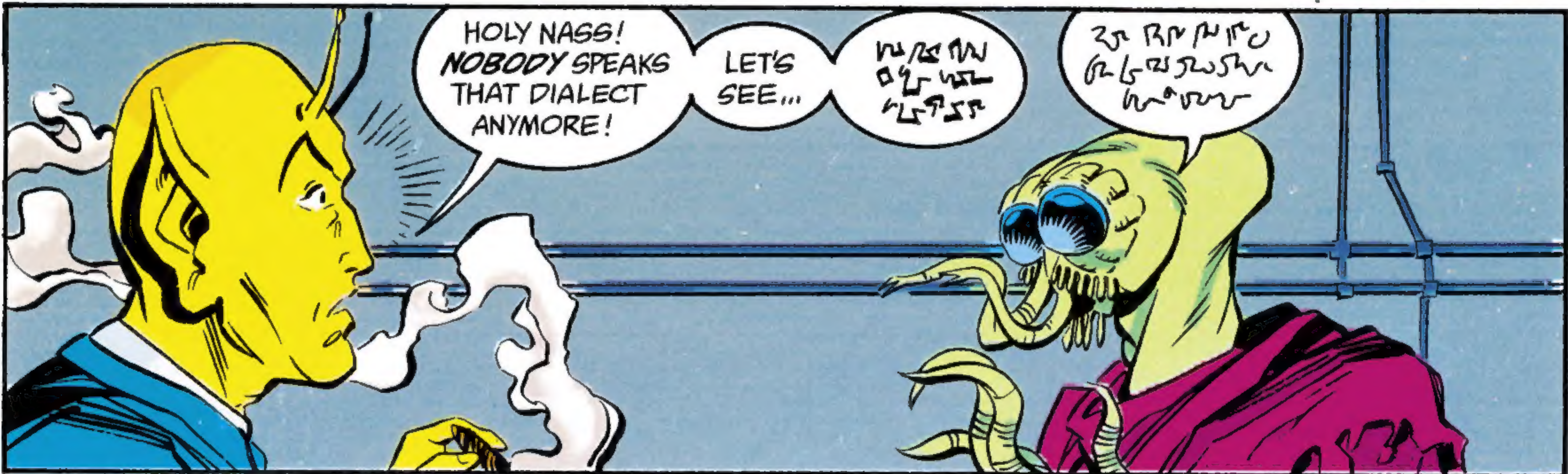
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IN THE COSMOS TO DO WITH A DURLAN. THEY WERE LESS POPULAR *THEN* THAN THEY ARE *NOW*.

BUT I DID KNOW *ONE* DURLAN: *THE*--
MERCHANT, ENTREPRENEUR, *SMUGGLER*.



SO,
WHAT'S YER
STORY?

20 102 5
20 102 5
20 102 5



HOLY NASS!
NOBODY SPEAKS
THAT DIALECT
ANYMORE!

LET'S
SEE...

20 102 5
20 102 5
20 102 5

20 102 5
20 102 5
20 102 5



YOUR FRIEND DOESN'T REMEMBER
WHERE HE COMES FROM--TOTAL
AMNESIA.

WELL,
WHAT CAN
WE DO FOR
HIM?



WE? HEY, MISTER, HE AIN'T
MY PROBLEM!

BUT, BUT...
WE OUGHT TO
GET HIM BACK
TO DURLA OR
SOMETHING...

YOU GOT
20,000
CREDITS? IF
SO, I'LL GET
'IM BACK.



I DON'T HAVE THAT
KIND OF CREDIT! I COULD
SPARE MAYBE 5000,
I GUESS...

DREAM
ON...

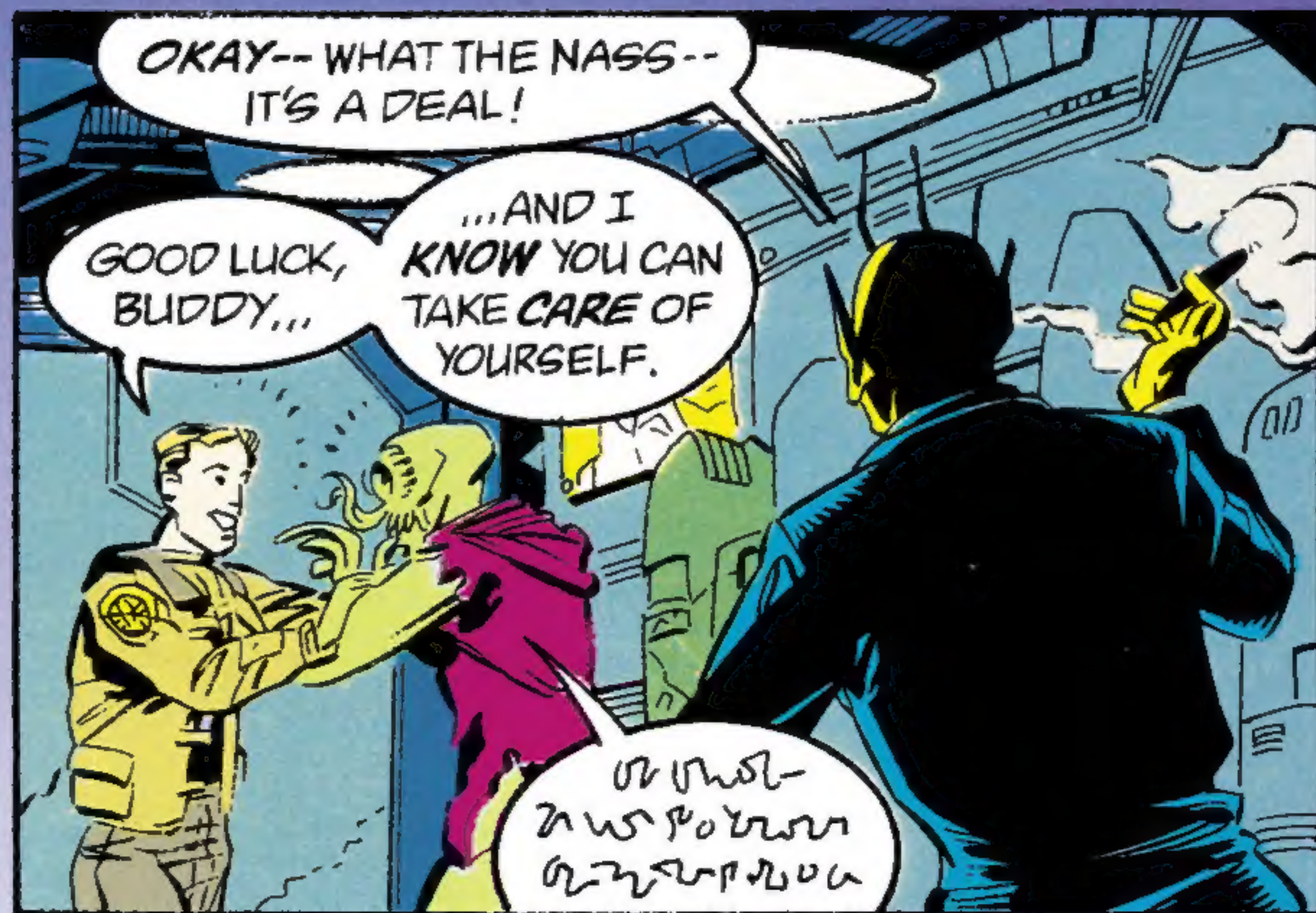
AND LOOK... MAYBE
HE COULD WORK FOR
YOU--MAKE UP THE
DIFFERENCE.



HMMM... A LITTLE
SLAVE LABOR MIGHT
BE NICE...

WUTR
WUTR
WUTR

WUTR
WUTR
WUTR

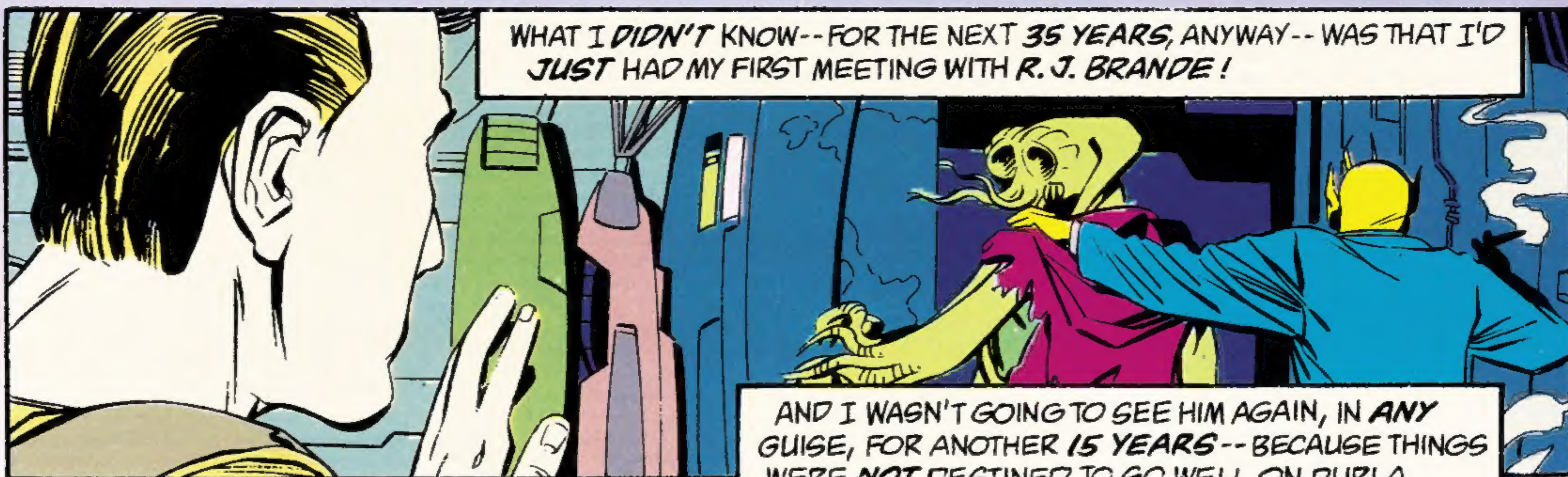


OKAY-- WHAT THE NASS--
IT'S A DEAL!

GOOD LUCK,
BUDDY...

...AND I
KNOW YOU CAN
TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF.

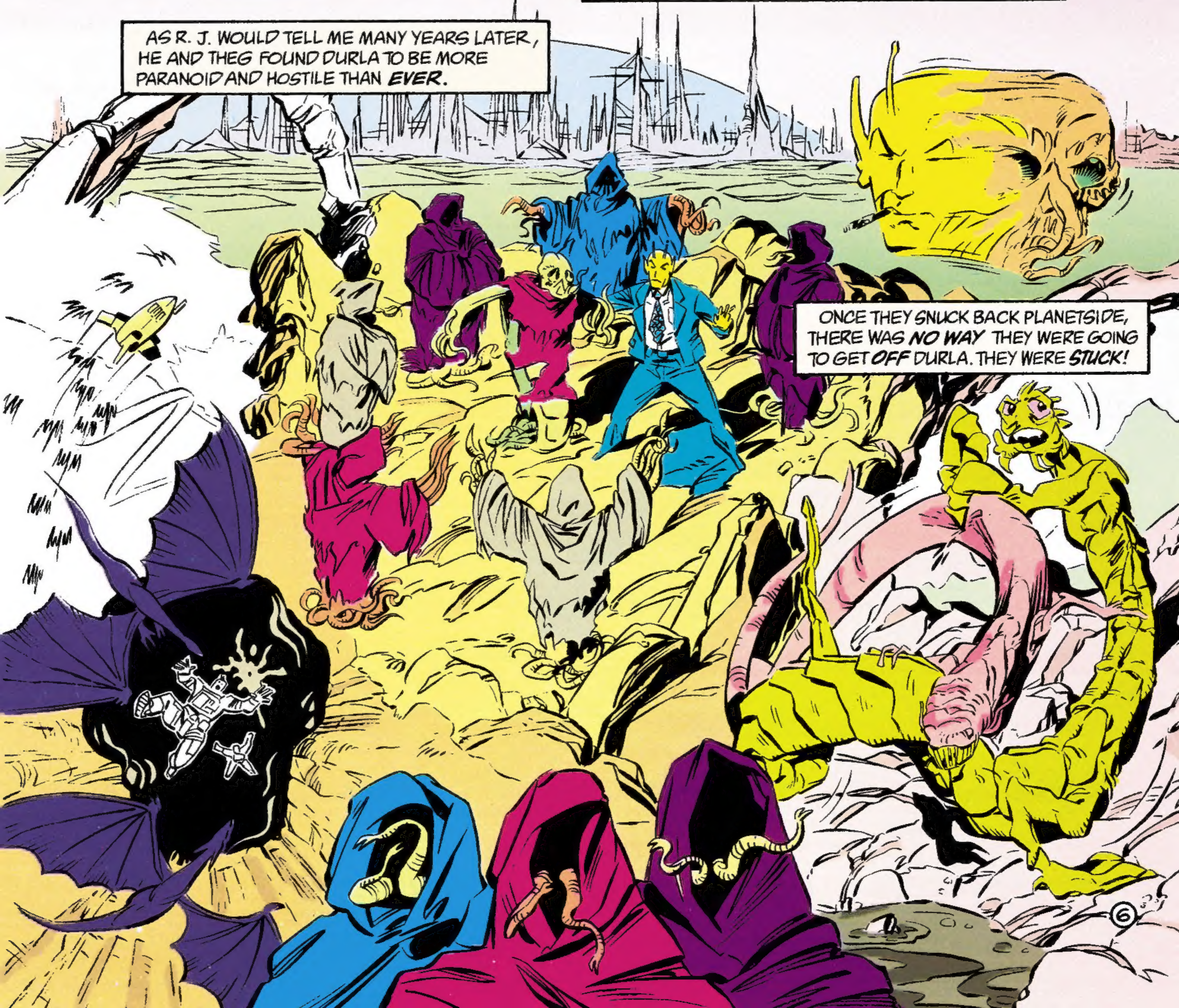
WUTR
WUTR
WUTR



WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW-- FOR THE NEXT 35 YEARS, ANYWAY-- WAS THAT I'D
JUST HAD MY FIRST MEETING WITH R. J. BRANDE!

AND I WASN'T GOING TO SEE HIM AGAIN, IN ANY
GUISE, FOR ANOTHER 15 YEARS-- BECAUSE THINGS
WERE NOT DESTINED TO GO WELL ON DURLA.

AS R. J. WOULD TELL ME MANY YEARS LATER,
HE AND THEG FOUND DURLA TO BE MORE
PARANOID AND HOSTILE THAN *EVER*.



ONCE THEY SNUCK BACK PLANETSIDE,
THERE WAS NO WAY THEY WERE GOING
TO GET OFF DURLA. THEY WERE *STUCK*!

RENÉ J. BRANDE SPENT ABOUT TEN UNHAPPY YEARS STRANDED THERE, *MISERABLE* IN THE INTOLERANT, BRUTAL CULTURE.

THE ONLY GOOD THING THAT HAPPENED WAS *ZHAY*, THEG'S *SISTER*. RENÉ AND ZHAY *MATED*, IMPREGNATED EACH OTHER.

BUT LIKE EVERYTHING *ELSE* ON DURLA, THE RELATIONSHIP WAS *POISONED* BY *PARANOIA*.

THEG HAD BROUGHT BACK *YORGGIAN FEVER*, A DISEASE FATAL TO DURLANS UNLESS TREATED BY U.P. SCIENCE...

...AND THE DURLANS DIDN'T KNOW OR *CARE* ABOUT THE U.P.'S CURE.

ZHAY *DIED*.

RENÉ AND THEG WERE SENT INTO QUARANTINE WITH THE SURE KNOWLEDGE THAT *SOMEDAY* THEY WOULD *LOSE* THEIR DURLAN ABILITIES AND BE FROZEN IN ONE SHAPE *FOREVER*.

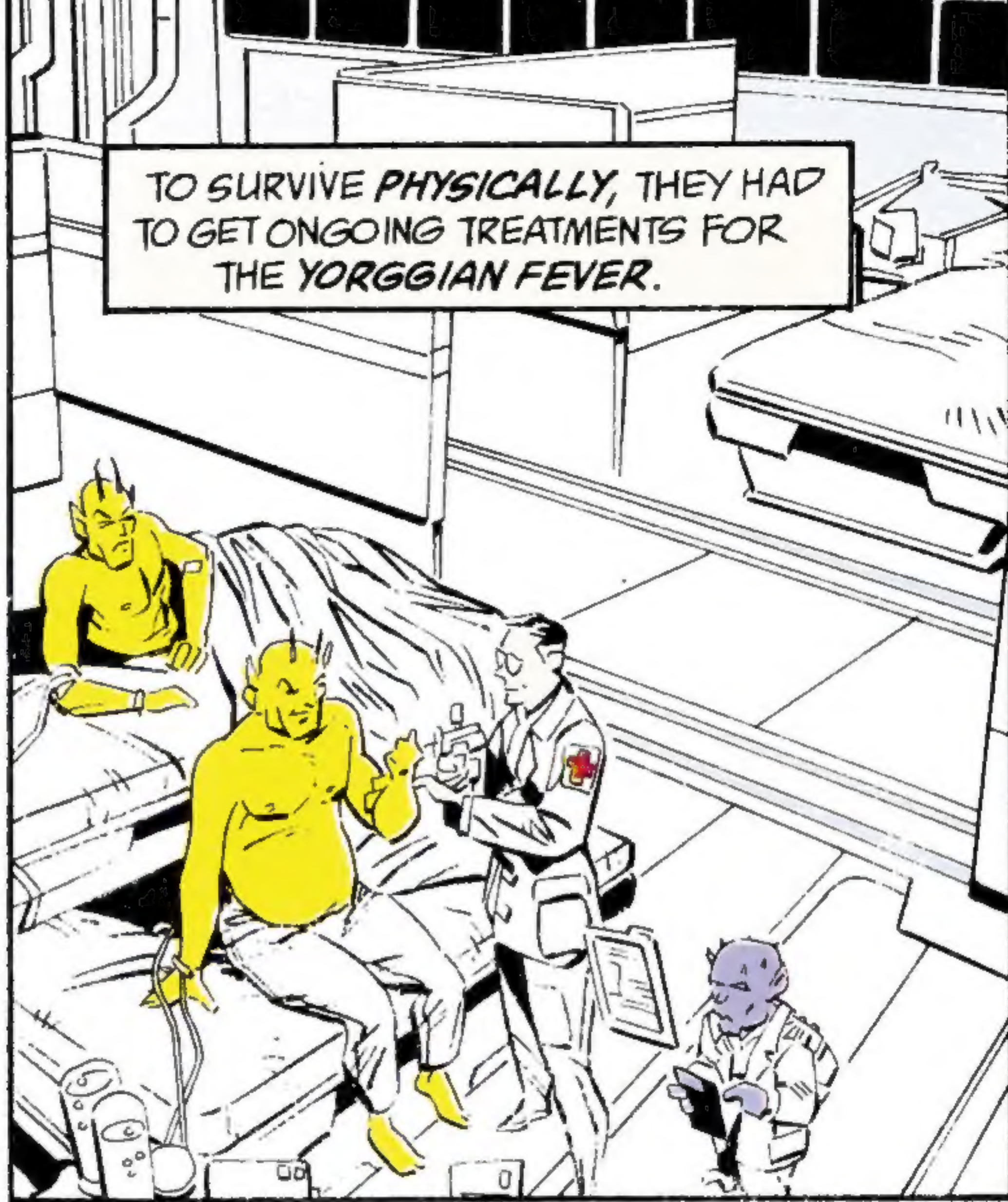
RENÉ'S OFFSPRING, *REEP* AND *LIGGT*, WERE TURNED OVER TO ANOTHER OF THEG'S SISTERS, *J1*.

SHE RAISED THEM AS HER *OWN*.

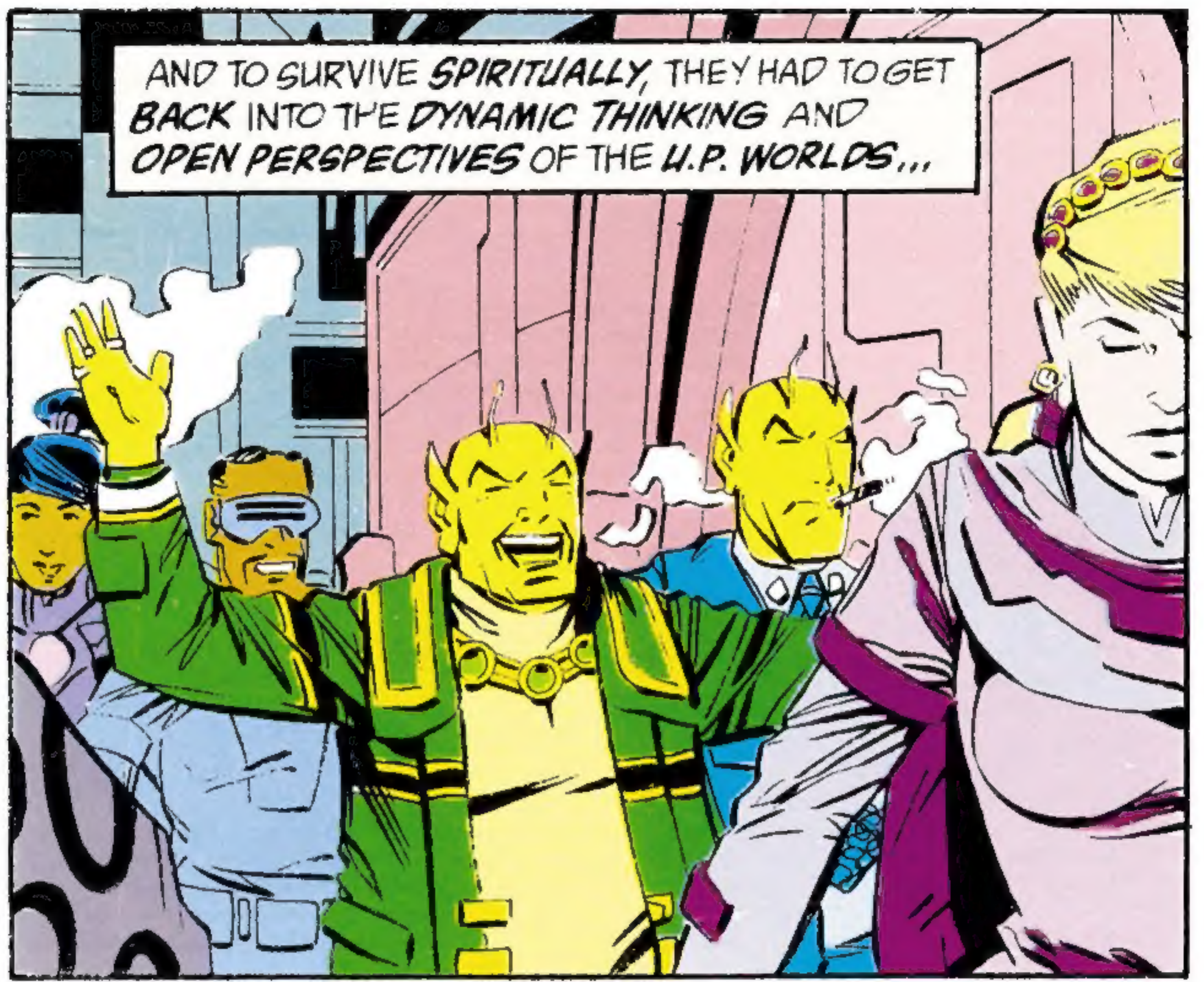
MEANWHILE, LIFE IN EXILE BROUGHT RENÉ AND THEG INTO CONTACT WITH DURLA'S *SEAMIEST* SIDE...

...AND THE ONE *ELEMENT* RUTHLESS AND *CRAZY* ENOUGH TO FLOUT DURLA'S STRICTEST LAWS AND SMUGGLE RENÉ AND THEG *OFF-PLANET*.

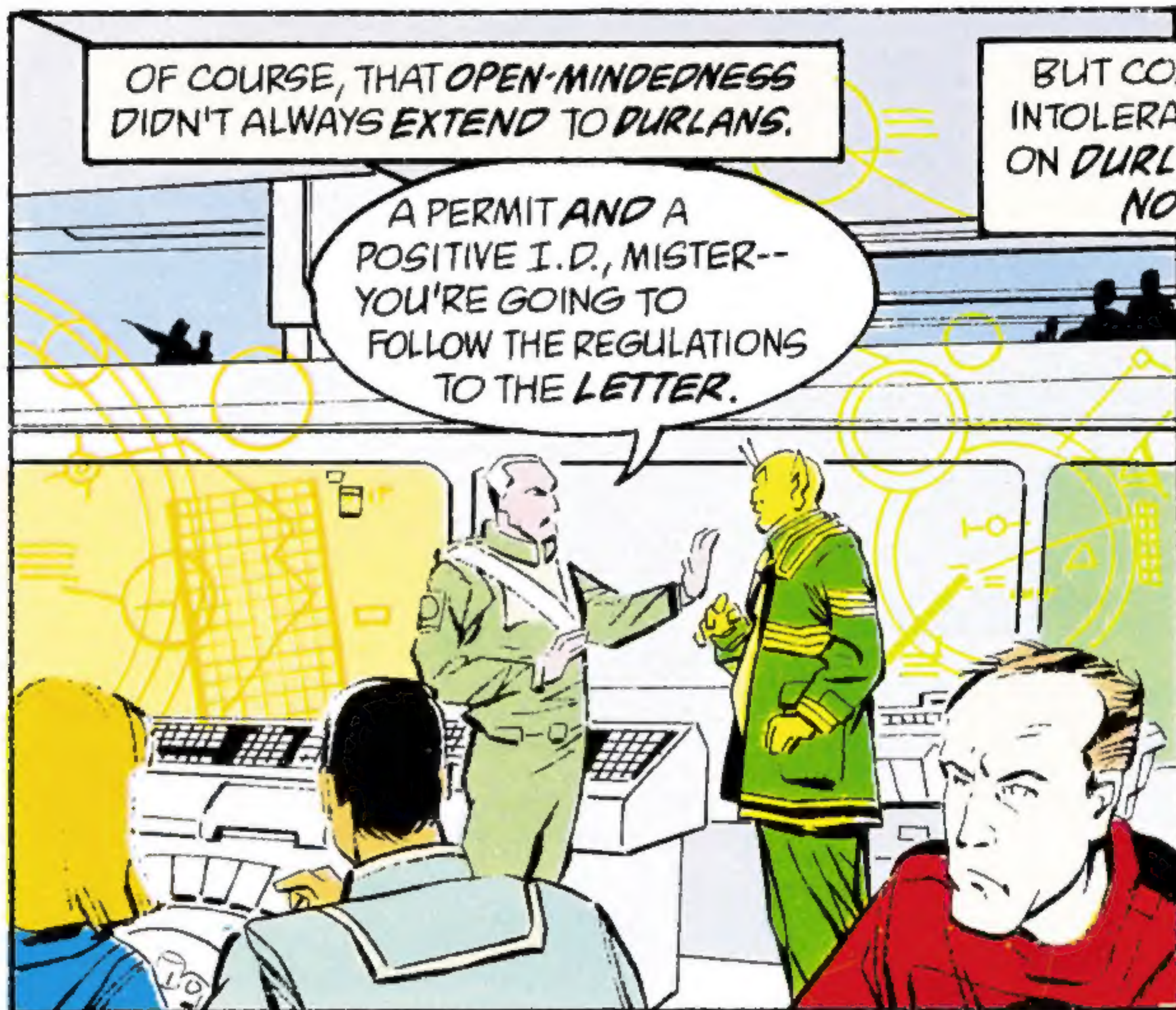
THEY WERE PUTTING THEIR *LIVES* ON THE *LINE*, BUT RENÉ AND THEG REALLY HAD NO CHOICE.



TO SURVIVE *PHYSICALLY*, THEY HAD TO GET ONGOING TREATMENTS FOR THE *YORGGIAN FEVER*.



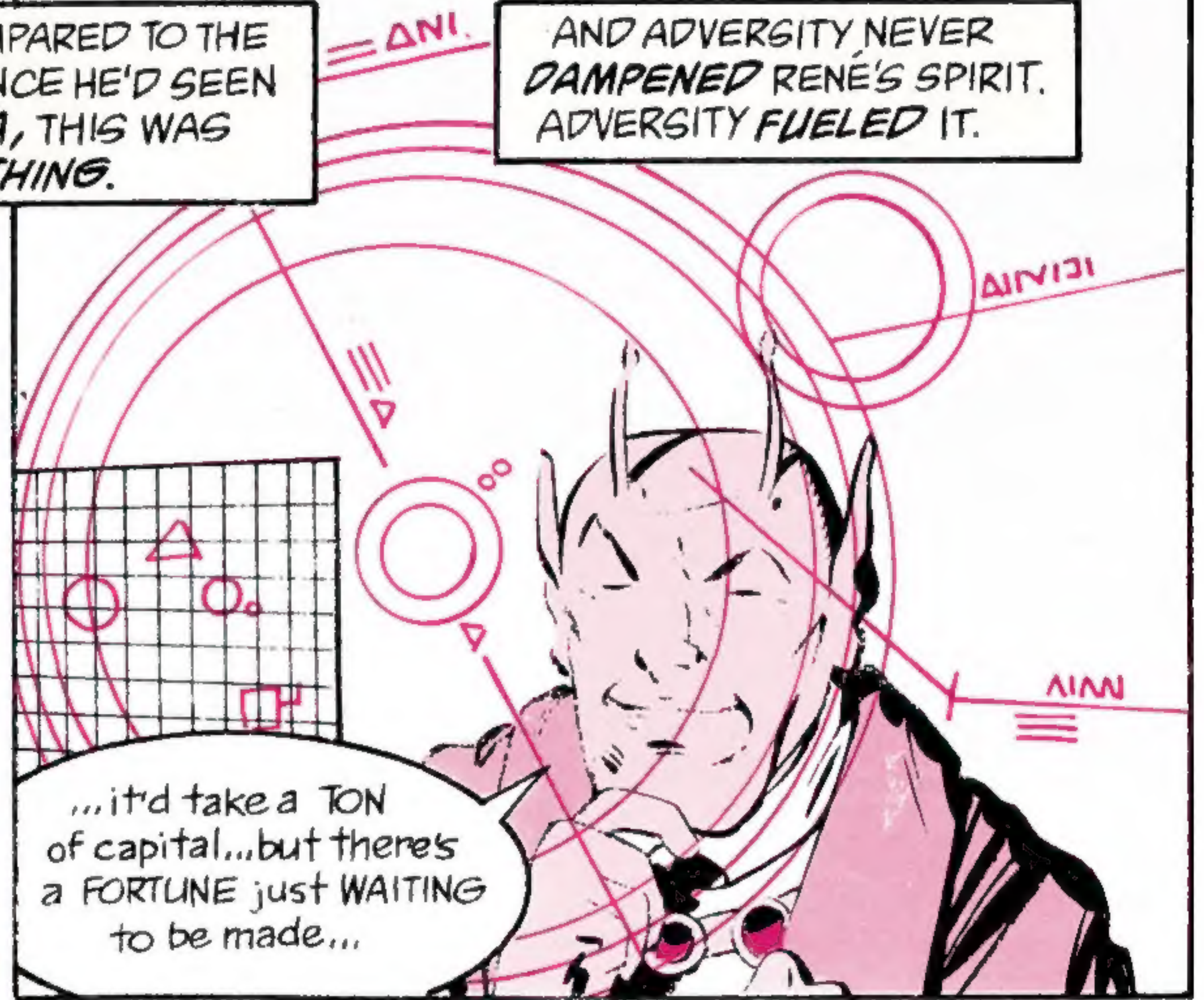
AND TO SURVIVE *SPIRITUALLY*, THEY HAD TO GET BACK INTO THE *DYNAMIC THINKING* AND *OPEN PERSPECTIVES* OF THE *U.P. WORLDS*...



OF COURSE, THAT *OPEN-MINDEDNESS* DIDN'T ALWAYS EXTEND TO *DURLANS*.

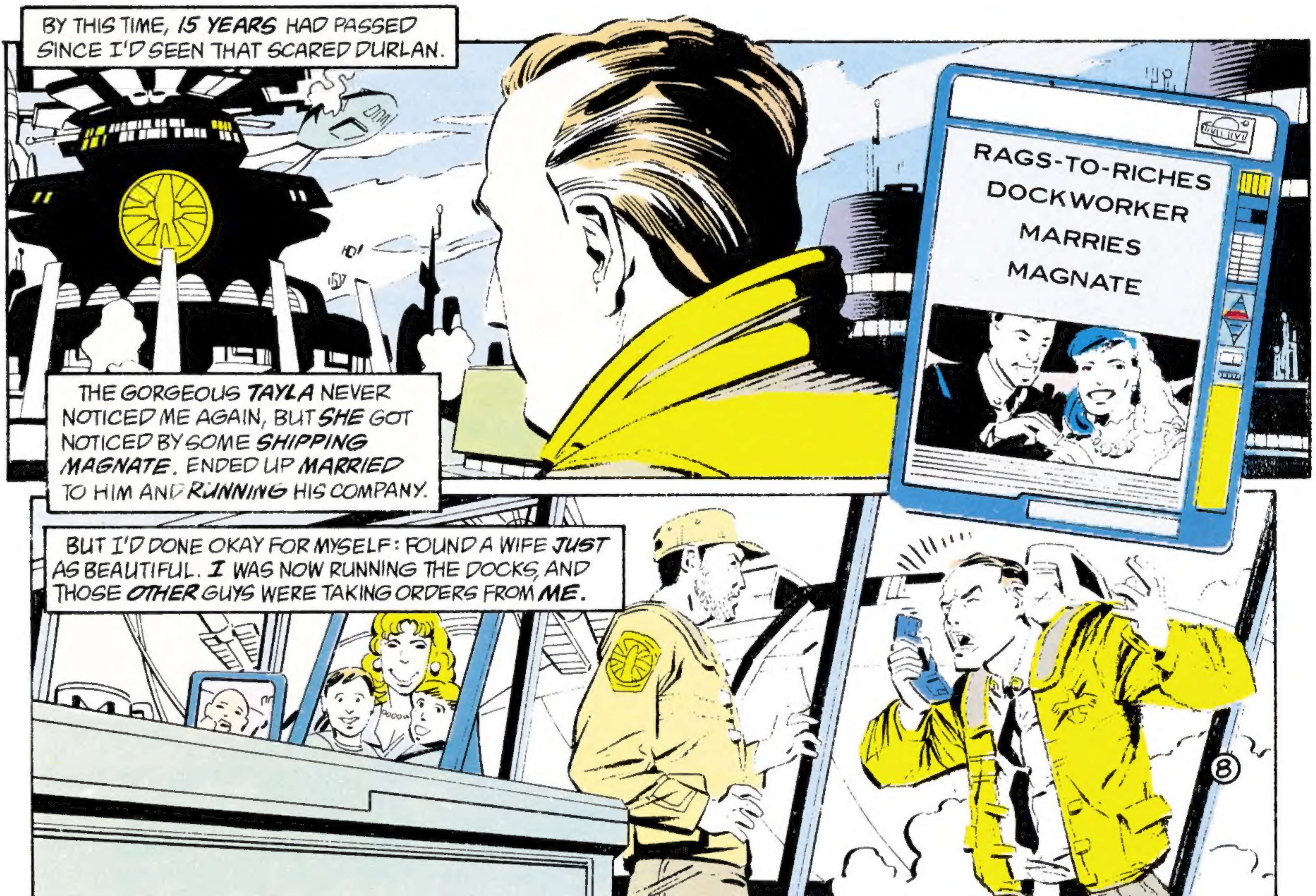
A PERMIT AND A POSITIVE I.D., MISTER-- YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW THE REGULATIONS TO THE *LETTER*.

BUT COMPARED TO THE INTOLERANCE HE'D SEEN ON *DURLA*, THIS WAS *NOTHING*.



AND ADVERSITY NEVER *DAMPENED* RENÉ'S SPIRIT. ADVERSITY *FUELED* IT.

...it'd take a *TON* of capital...but there's a *FORTUNE* just *WAITING* to be made...



BY THIS TIME, *15 YEARS* HAD PASSED SINCE I'D SEEN THAT SCARED *DURLAN*.

THE GORGEOUS *TAYLA* NEVER NOTICED ME AGAIN, BUT *SHE* GOT NOTICED BY SOME *SHIPPING MAGNATE*. ENDED UP *MARRIED* TO HIM AND *RUNNING* HIS COMPANY.

BUT I'D DONE OKAY FOR MYSELF: FOUND A WIFE JUST AS BEAUTIFUL. I WAS NOW *RUNNING* THE *DOCKS*, AND THOSE *OTHER* GUYS WERE TAKING ORDERS FROM *ME*.



THEN ONE DAY, EVERYTHING *CHANGED*...

YOU KNOW, YOUNG MAN, I'VE HAD MY EYE ON YOU. YOU DO AN *EXCELLENT* JOB OF RUNNING THESE DOCKS.

WHO--?

RENÉ JACQUES BRANDE...OF BRANDE INDUSTRIES? PERHAPS YOU'VE *HEARD* OF US.

EVERYBODY'D HEARD OF BRANDE INDUSTRIES --OF THE TWO FISTY COUSINS WHO'D COME OUT OF *NOWHERE* TO CREATE THE *STAR-BIRTHING* INDUSTRY.

I-IT'S AN *HONOR*, SIR.

NONSENSE. ENOUGH OF THAT KIND OF TALK. IF YOU'RE GOING TO *WORK* FOR ME, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FEEL *COMFORTABLE* WITH ME, LAD!

WORK FOR YOU?

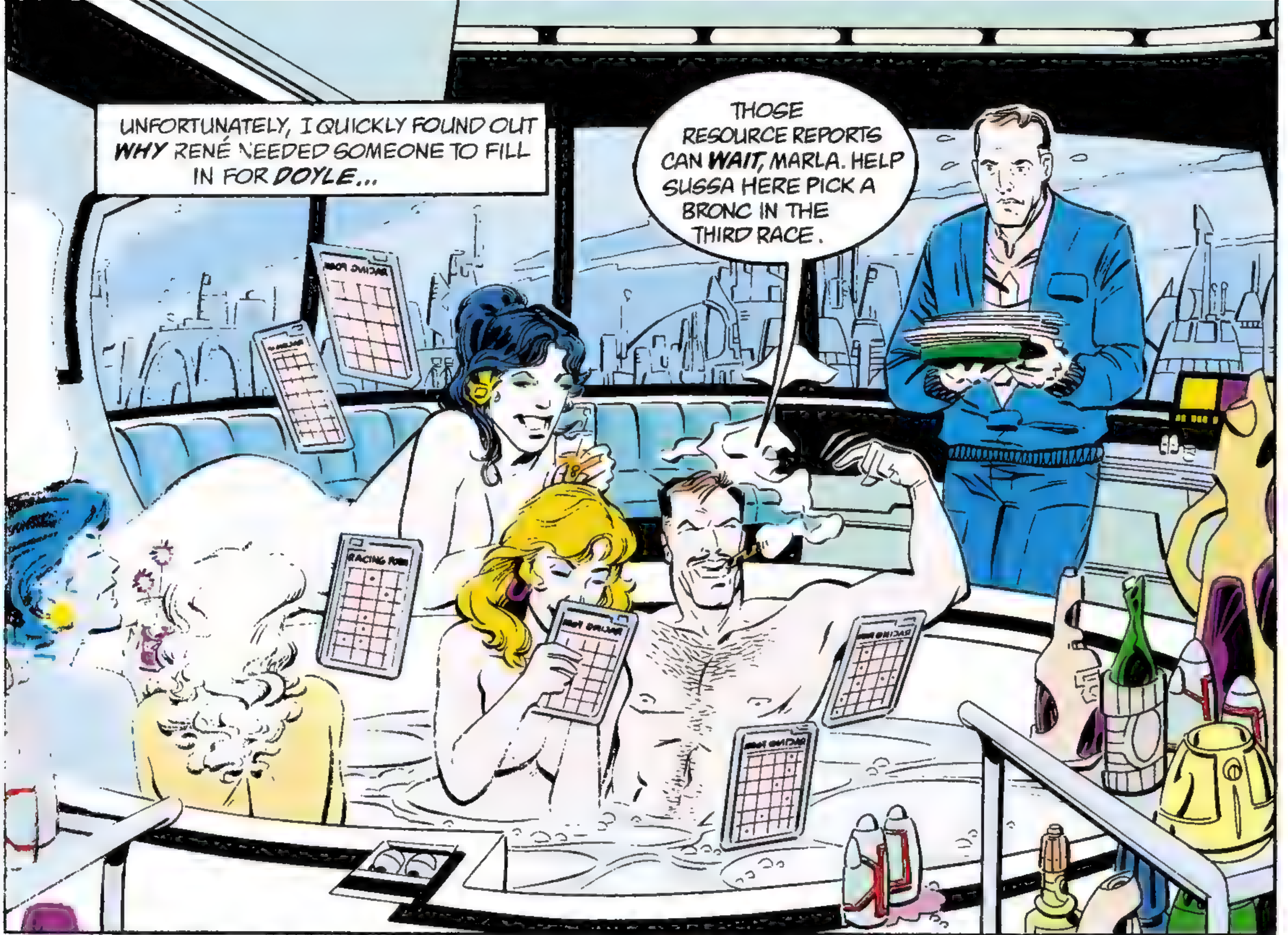
THAT'S WHAT I'M *HOPING* FOR, ANYWAY. MY COUSIN, THEG--UH... *DOYLE*... IS SPENDING MORE AND MORE TIME ON, WELL, *OTHER* PURSUITS.

WE NEED SOME *NEW BLOOD*, A *HARD WORKER* WITH A *FRESH PERSPECTIVE*.

WELL? ARE YOU MY MAN?

YESSIR! YOU BET!

EXCELLENT! AND PLEASE FORGET THAT "SIR" BUSINESS!



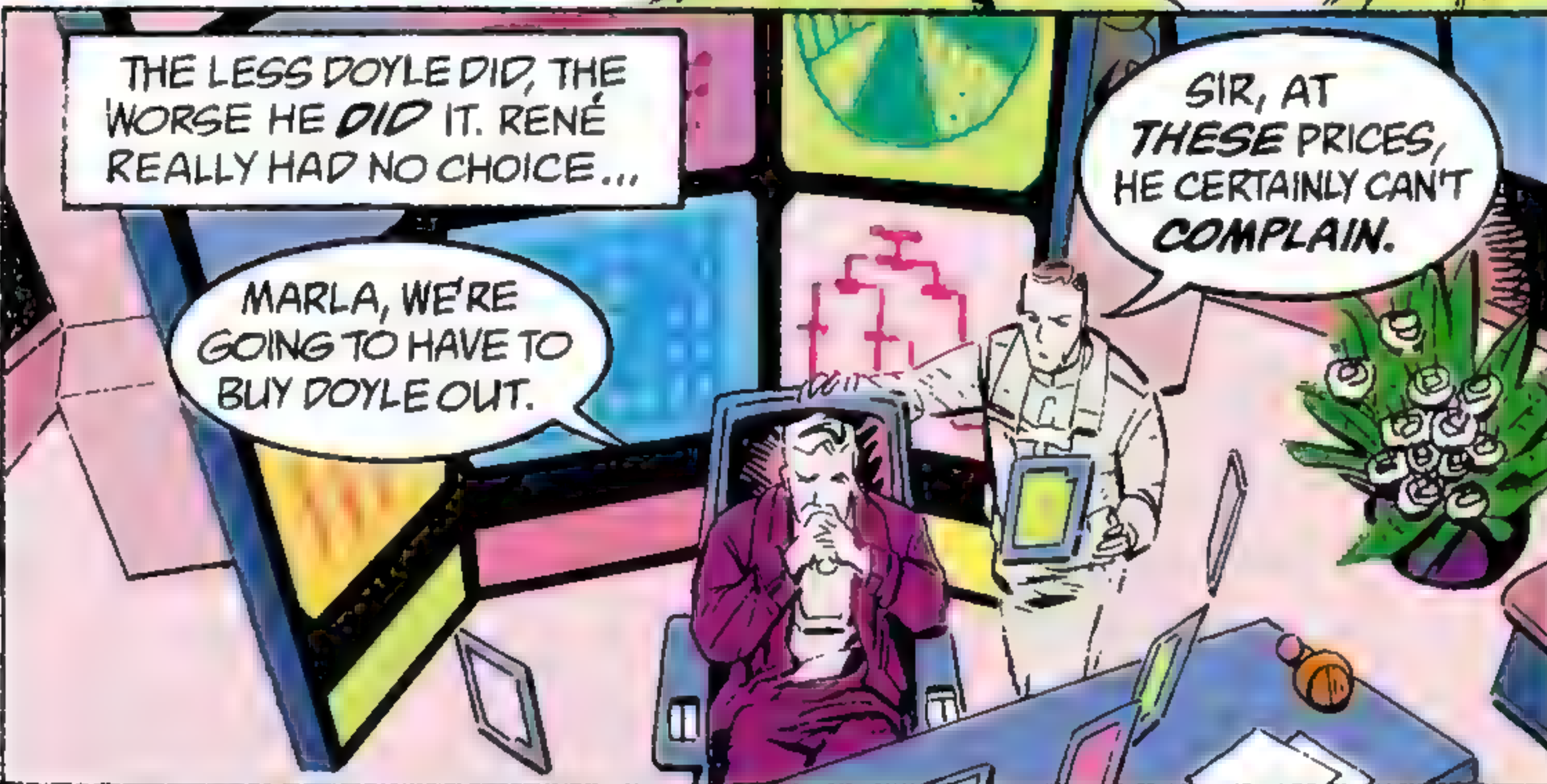
UNFORTUNATELY, I QUICKLY FOUND OUT WHY RENÉ NEEDED SOMEONE TO FILL IN FOR DOYLE...

THOSE RESOURCE REPORTS CAN WAIT, MARLA. HELP SUSSA HERE PICK A BRONC IN THE THIRD RACE.



THE BRAND EMPIRE MUSHROOMED, AND RENÉ FLOURISHED IN HIS SUCCESS.

BUT DOYLE COULDN'T HANDLE IT.



THE LESS DOYLE DID, THE WORSE HE DID IT. RENÉ REALLY HAD NO CHOICE...

MARLA, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO BUY DOYLE OUT.

SIR, AT THESE PRICES, HE CERTAINLY CAN'T COMPLAIN.



HE'LL BE VERY HAPPY...FOR A WHILE.

AND THEN HE'LL BURN UP ALL THE MONEY, AND, I'M AFRAID, THAT WILL BE THE END OF HIM.



DON'T BLAME YOURSELF, SIR. YOU DID EVERYTHING YOU COULD TO STRAIGHTEN HIM OUT.

WE ALL DID.

BUT IT WASN'T ENOUGH, WAS IT?



HE THOUGHT HE COULD RUN FROM HIS PROBLEMS THROUGH EVEN MORE INDULGENCE.

EVENTUALLY THE MONEY *DID* RUN OUT AND THE DEBTS MOUNTED.

JUST ANOTHER NASTY NOTE FROM DOYLE, ASKING FOR *MONEY*, AS USUAL.

MY GOD! HE'S THREATENING YOUR LIFE!

BAH! PAY HIM NO MIND!

THERE ARE *MORE IMPORTANT* THINGS TO DO WITH OUR LIVES THAN *WORRY*...

BUT, SIR--!

...LIKE, WHAT AM I GIVING BACK TO THE UNIVERSE?

THIS IS *SERIOUS*, SIR!

AND I'M SERIOUS. I WAS PUT HERE TO DO SOMETHING MORE *IMPORTANT* THAN MAKE MONEY!

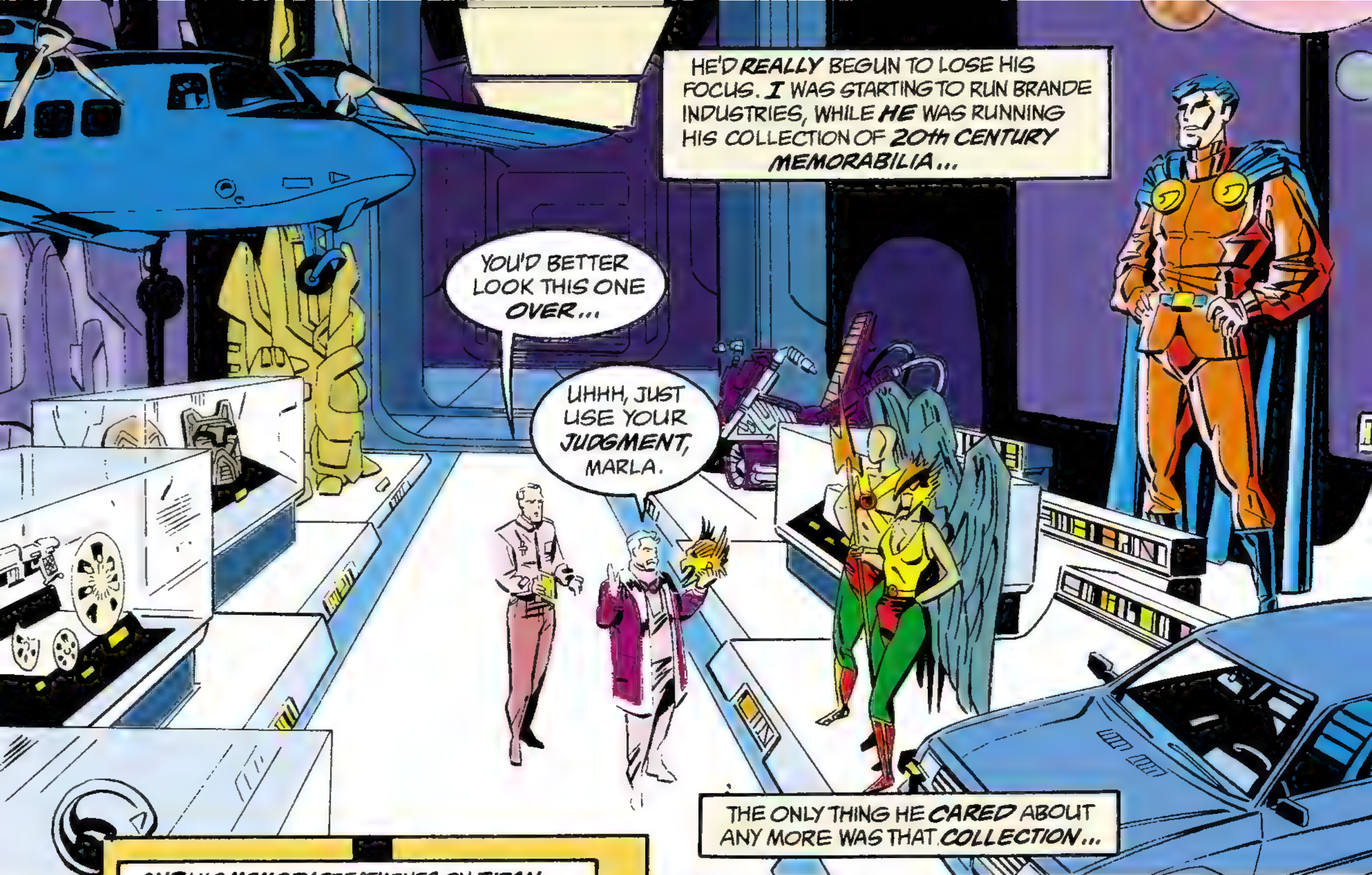
YOU GIVE TO CHARITY...

YOU CAN'T *TAKE* MORE THAN YOU *GIVE*, MARLA! THE UNIVERSE DOESN'T *LIKE* THAT!

AND IT'S TIME I STARTED *GIVING* LIKE I'VE BEEN *TAKING*!



AND *SOMEHOW* THERE'S A WAY I CAN DO THAT... *SOMEHOW*...

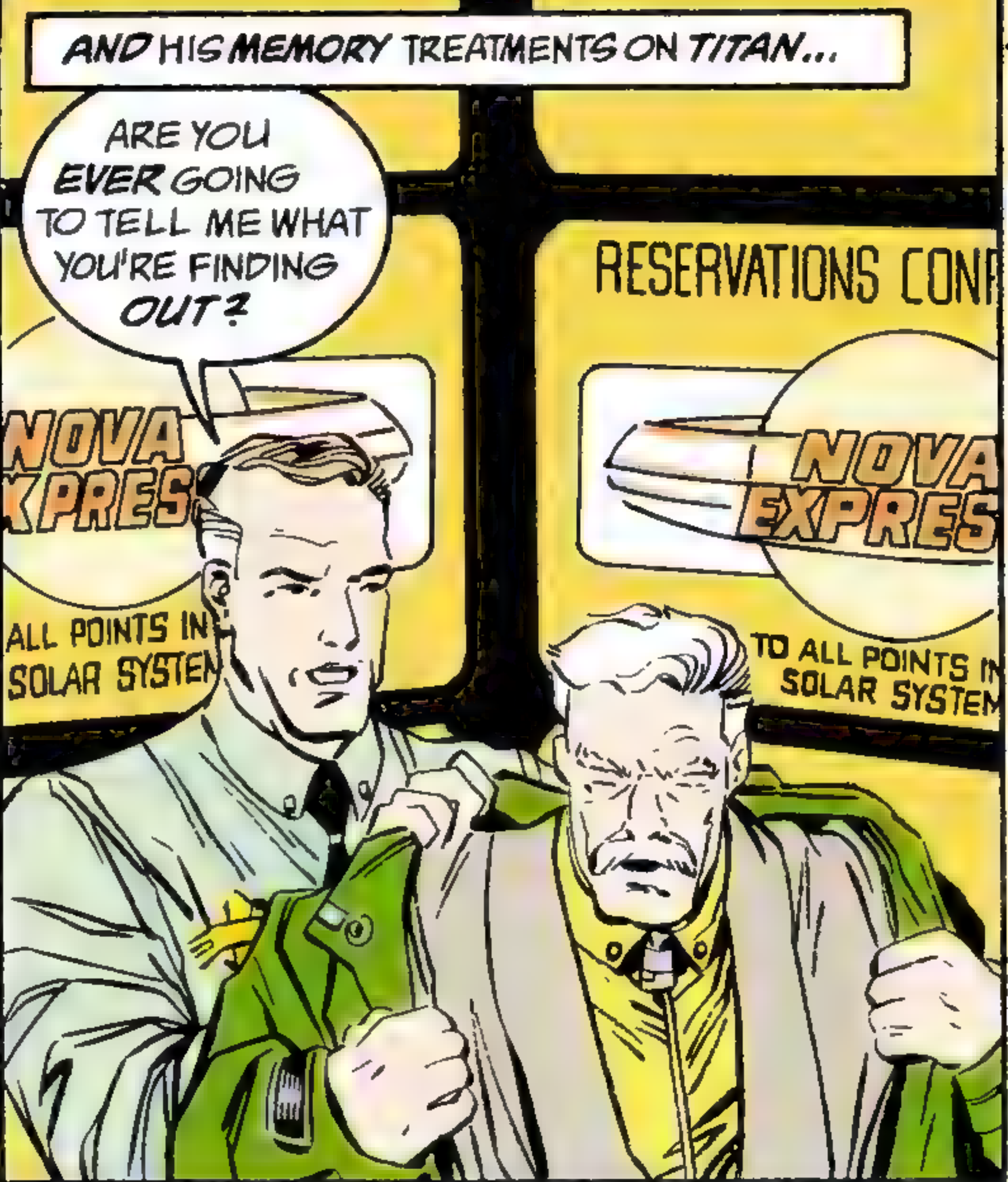


HE'D REALLY BEGUN TO LOSE HIS FOCUS. I WAS STARTING TO RUN BRANDE INDUSTRIES, WHILE HE WAS RUNNING HIS COLLECTION OF 20TH CENTURY MEMORABILIA...

YOU'D BETTER LOOK THIS ONE OVER...

UHHH, JUST USE YOUR JUDGMENT, MARLA.

THE ONLY THING HE CARED ABOUT ANY MORE WAS THAT COLLECTION...



AND HIS MEMORY TREATMENTS ON TITAN...

ARE YOU EVER GOING TO TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE FINDING OUT?

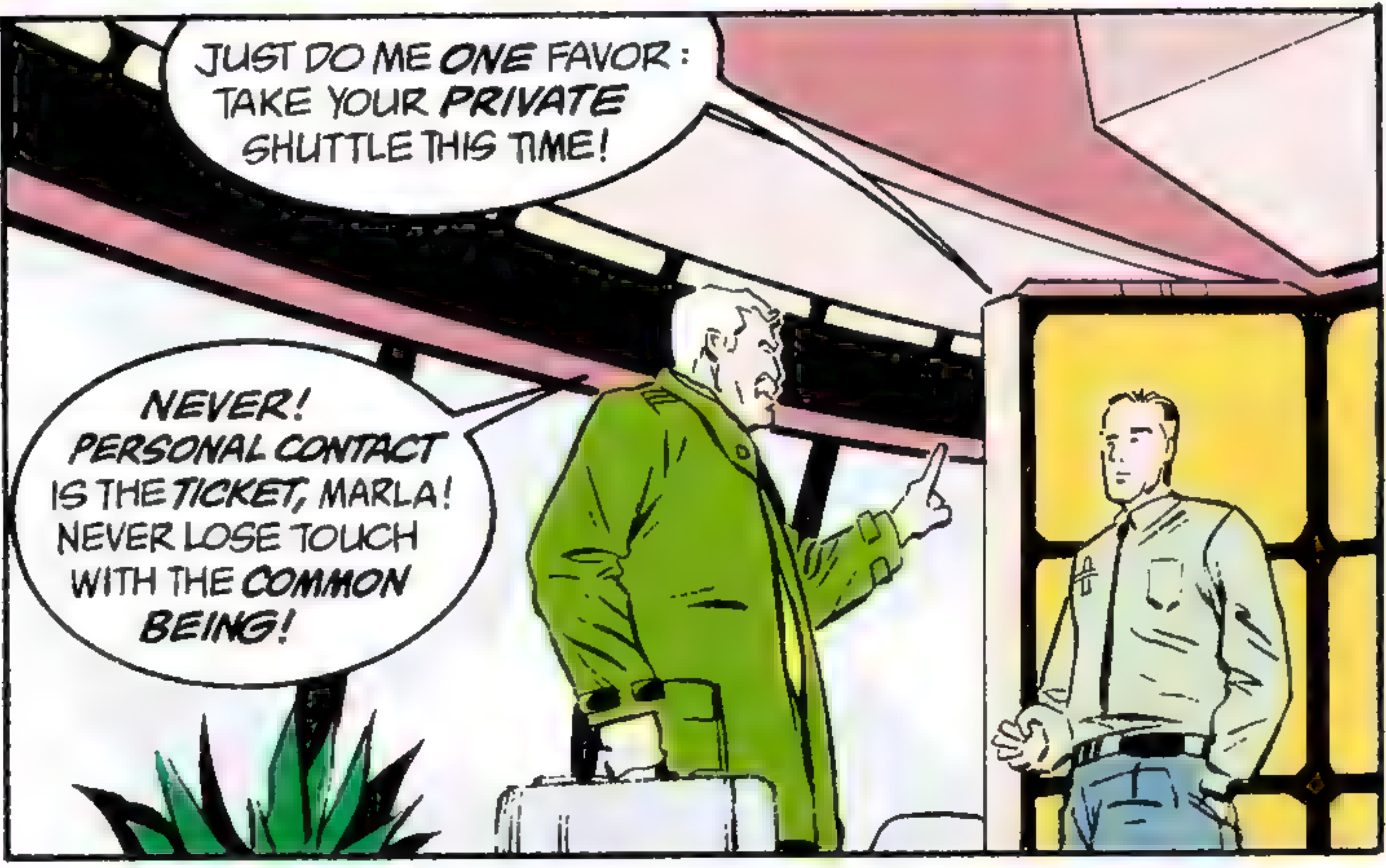
RESERVATIONS CONF
NOVA XPRES
TO ALL POINTS IN SOLAR SYSTEM



SORRY, MY FRIEND. IF I EVER FULLY UNDERSTAND MY PAST, MAYBE THEN I'LL BE READY TO TALK ABOUT IT.

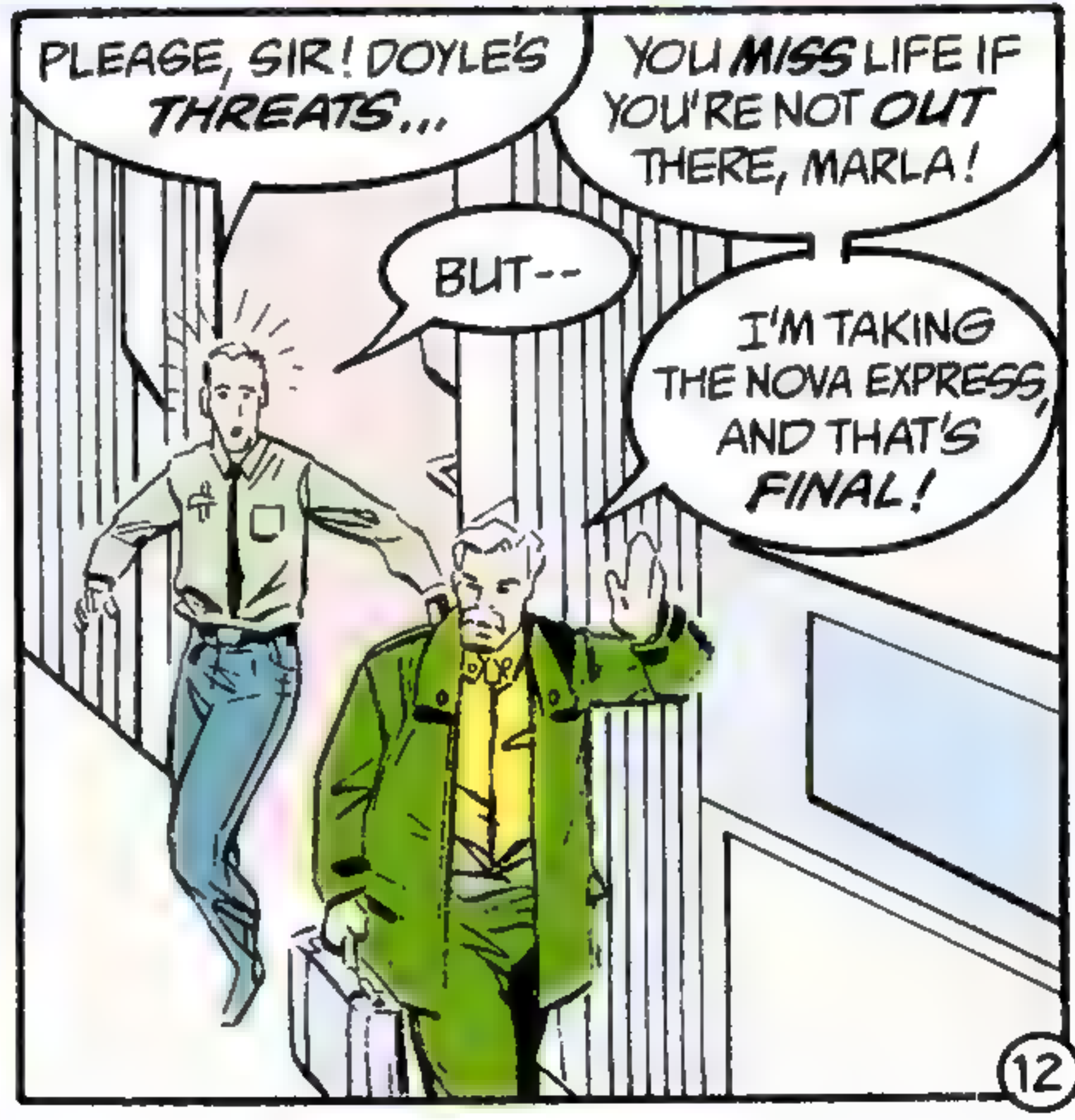
BUT UNTIL THEN...

OF COURSE, SIR.



JUST DO ME ONE FAVOR: TAKE YOUR PRIVATE SHUTTLE THIS TIME!

NEVER! PERSONAL CONTACT IS THE TICKET, MARLA! NEVER LOSE TOUCH WITH THE COMMON BEING!

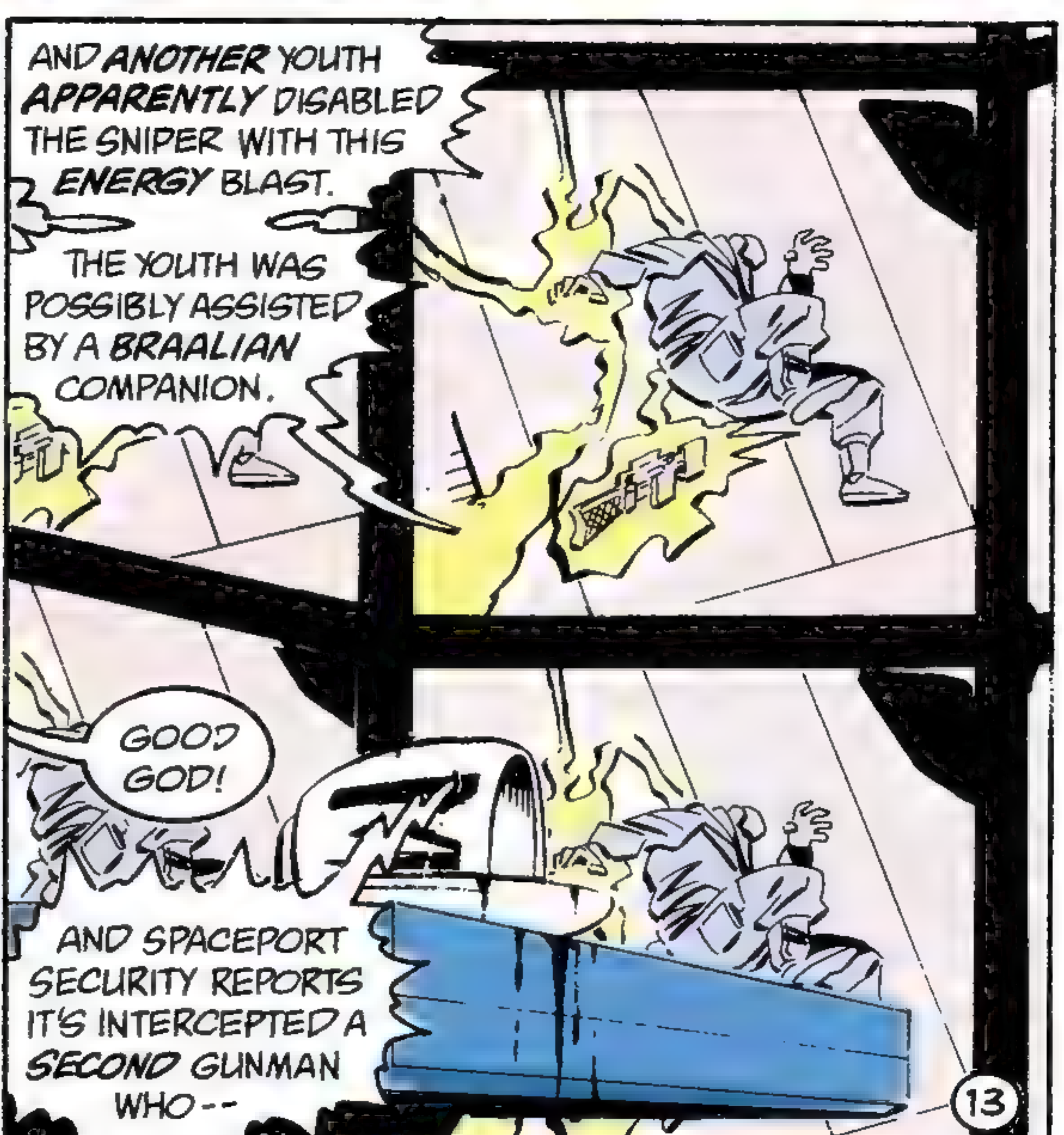
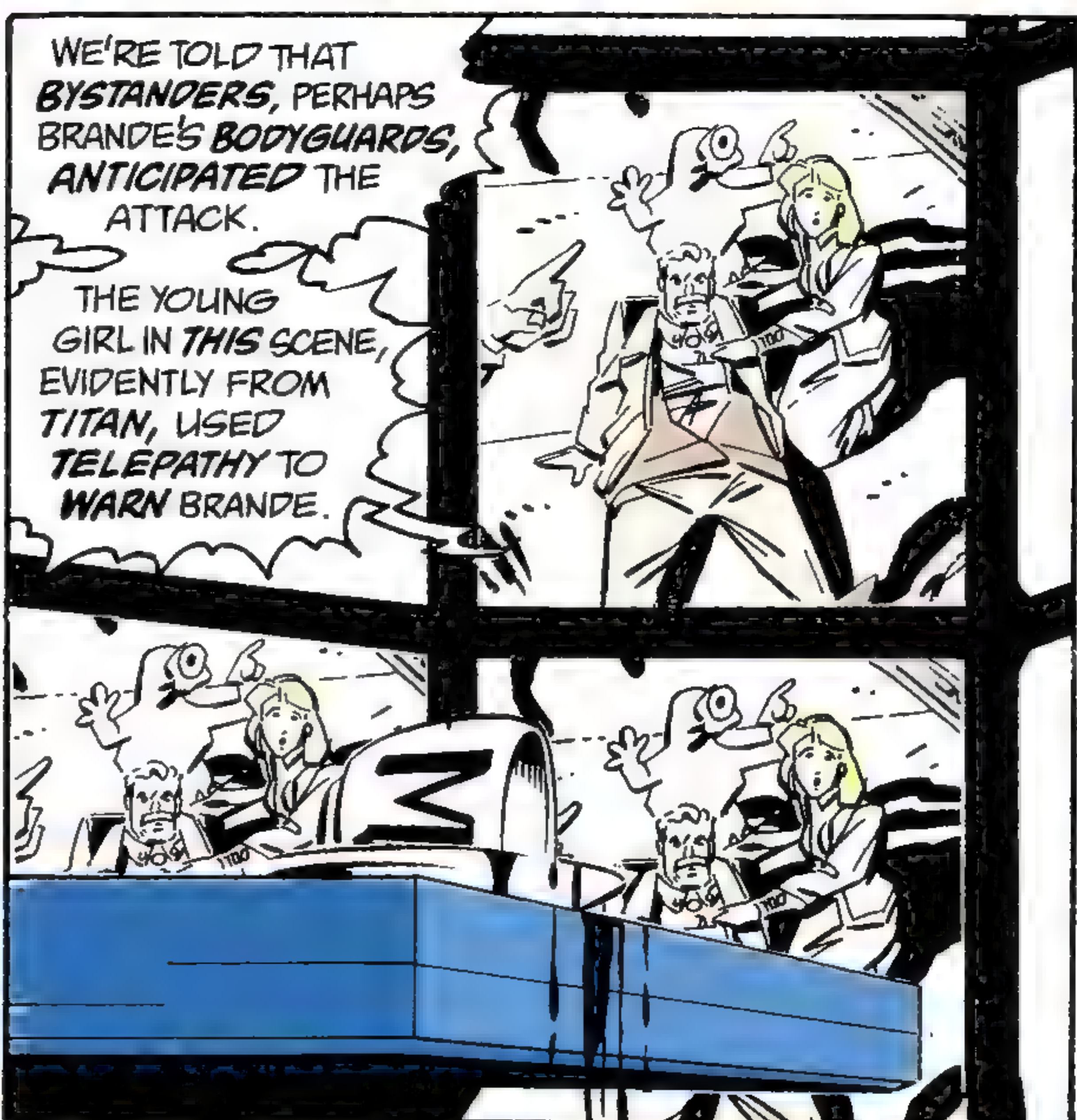
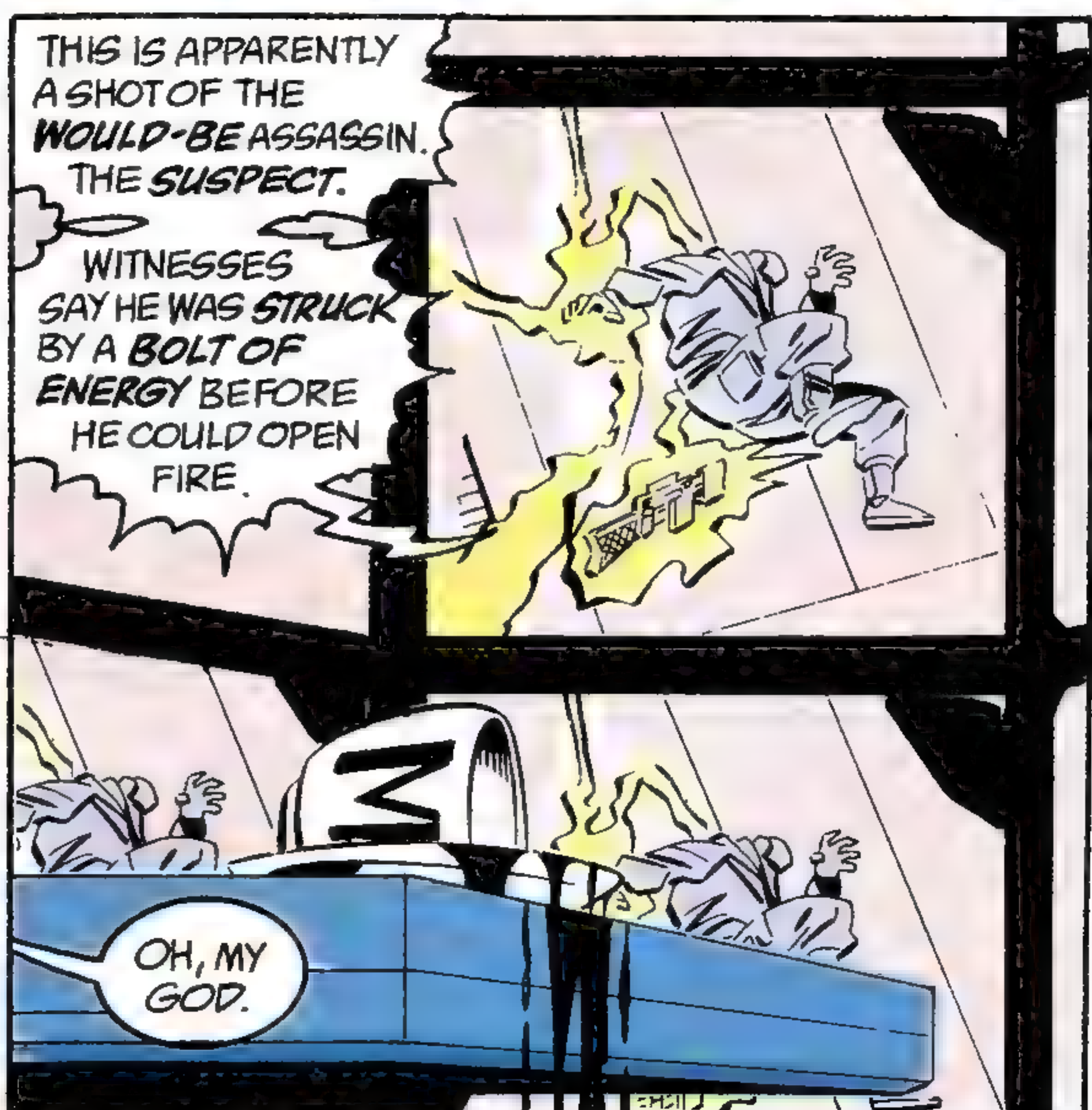
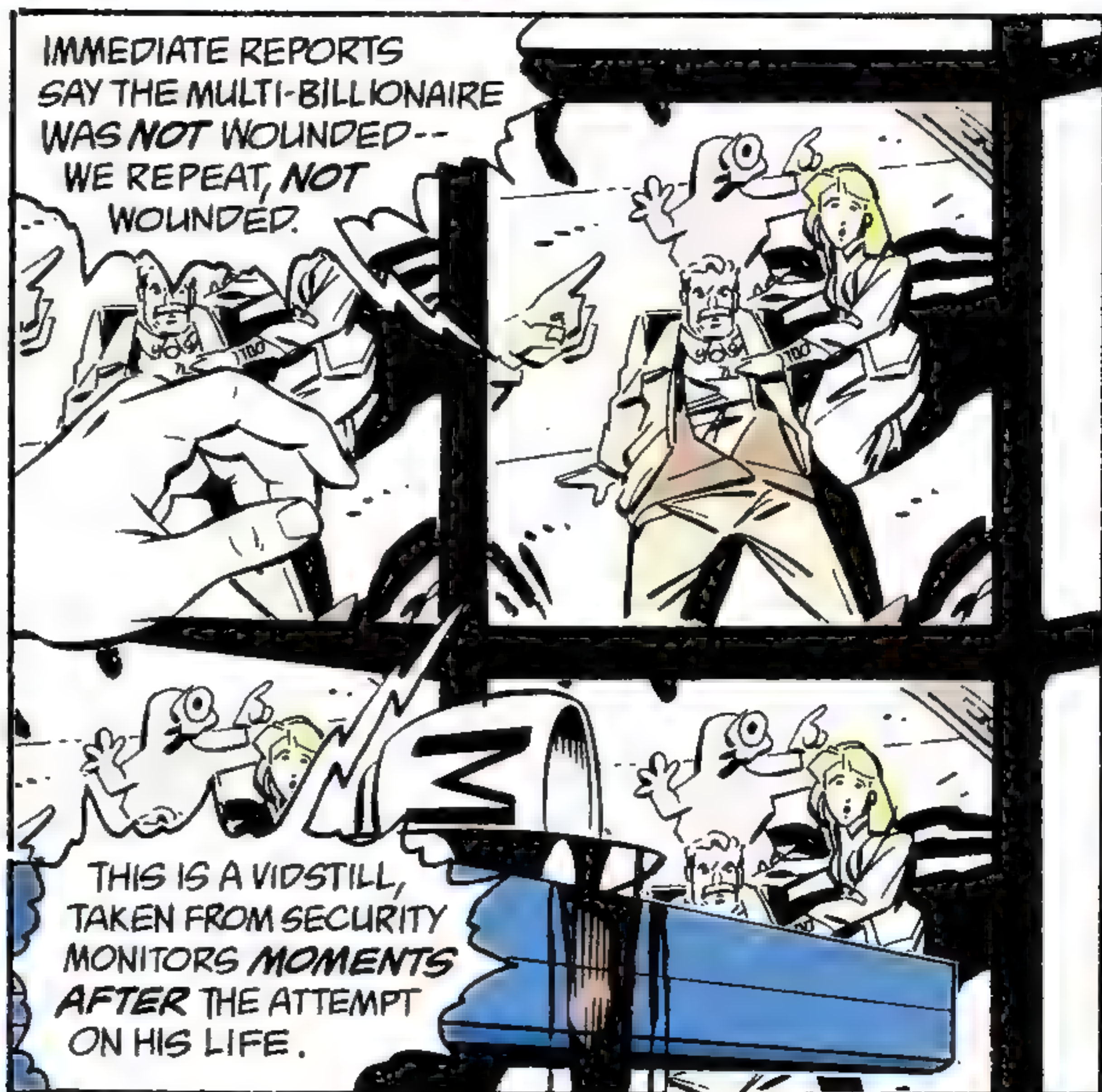
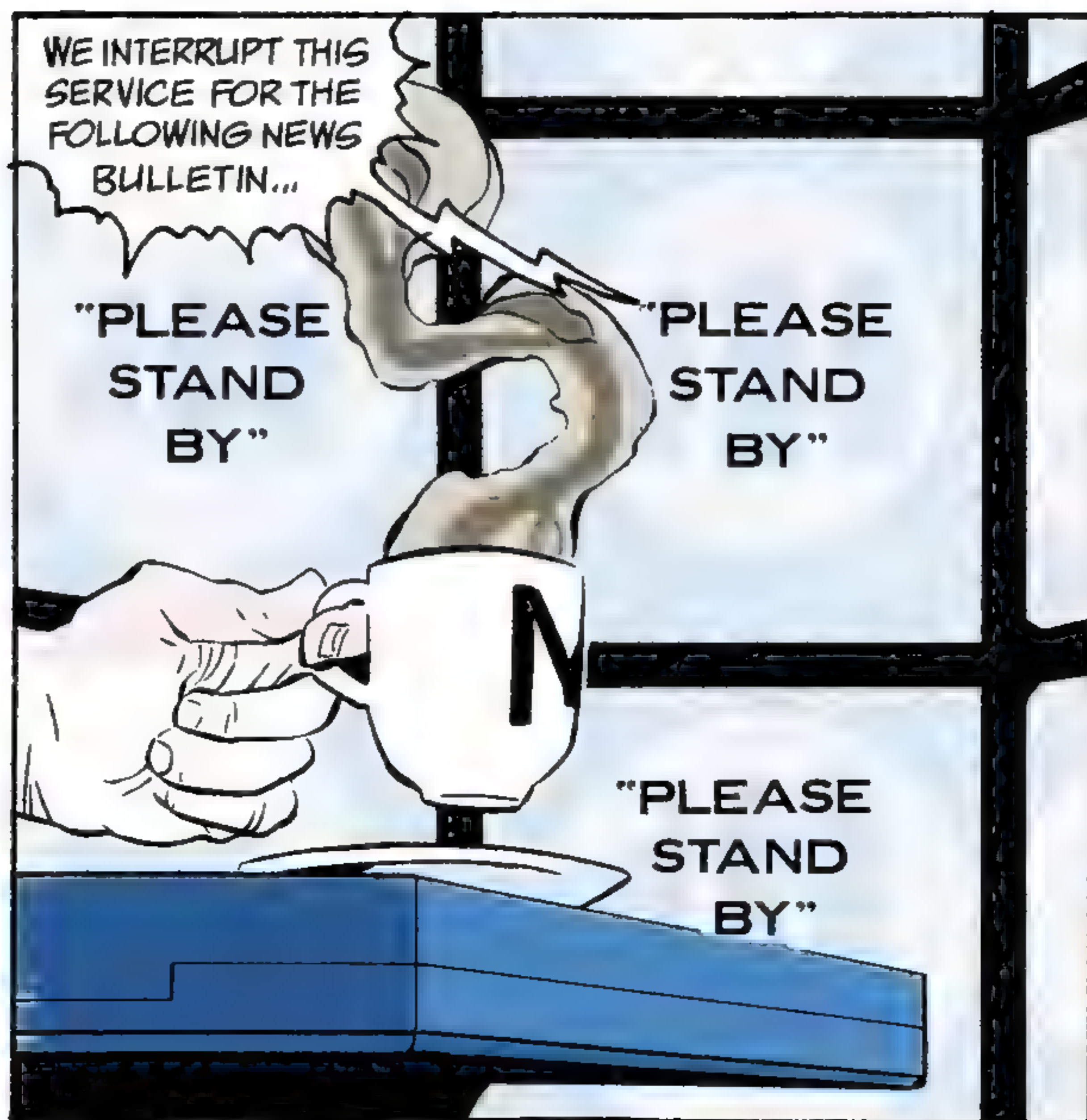


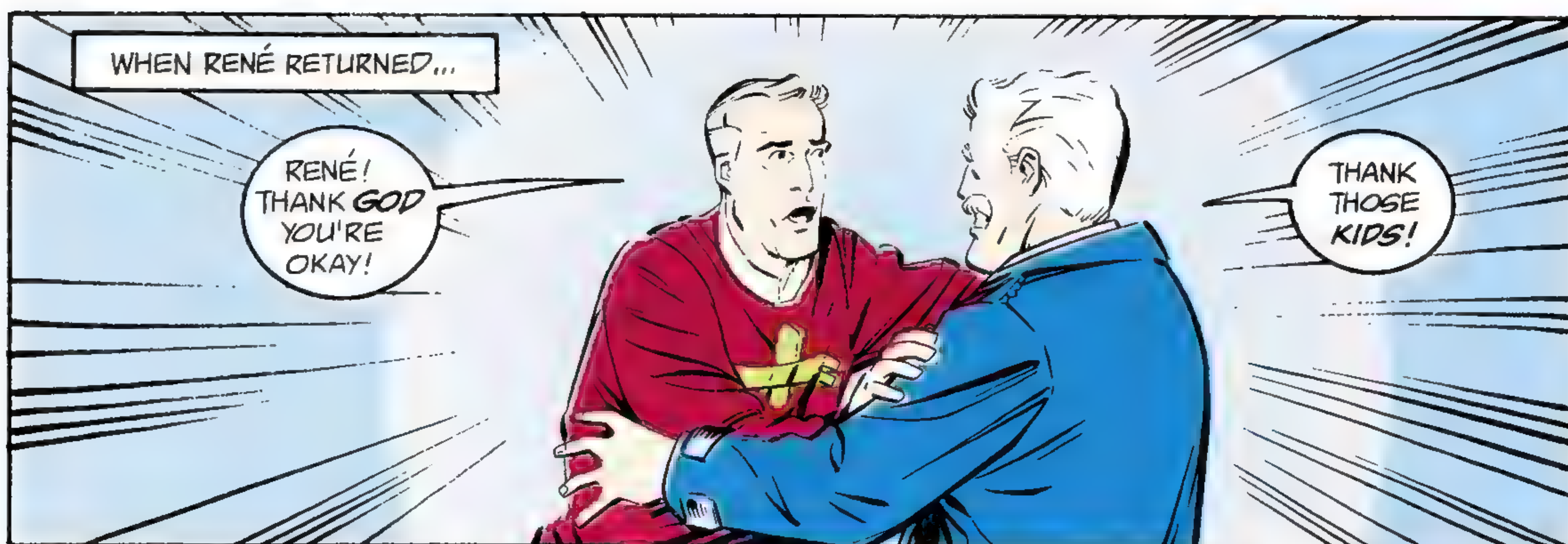
PLEASE, SIR! DOYLE'S THREATS...

YOU MISS LIFE IF YOU'RE NOT OUT THERE, MARLA!

BUT--

I'M TAKING THE NOVA EXPRESS, AND THAT'S FINAL!





WHEN RENÉ RETURNED...

RENÉ!
THANK *GOD*
YOU'RE
OKAY!

THANK
THOSE
KIDS!

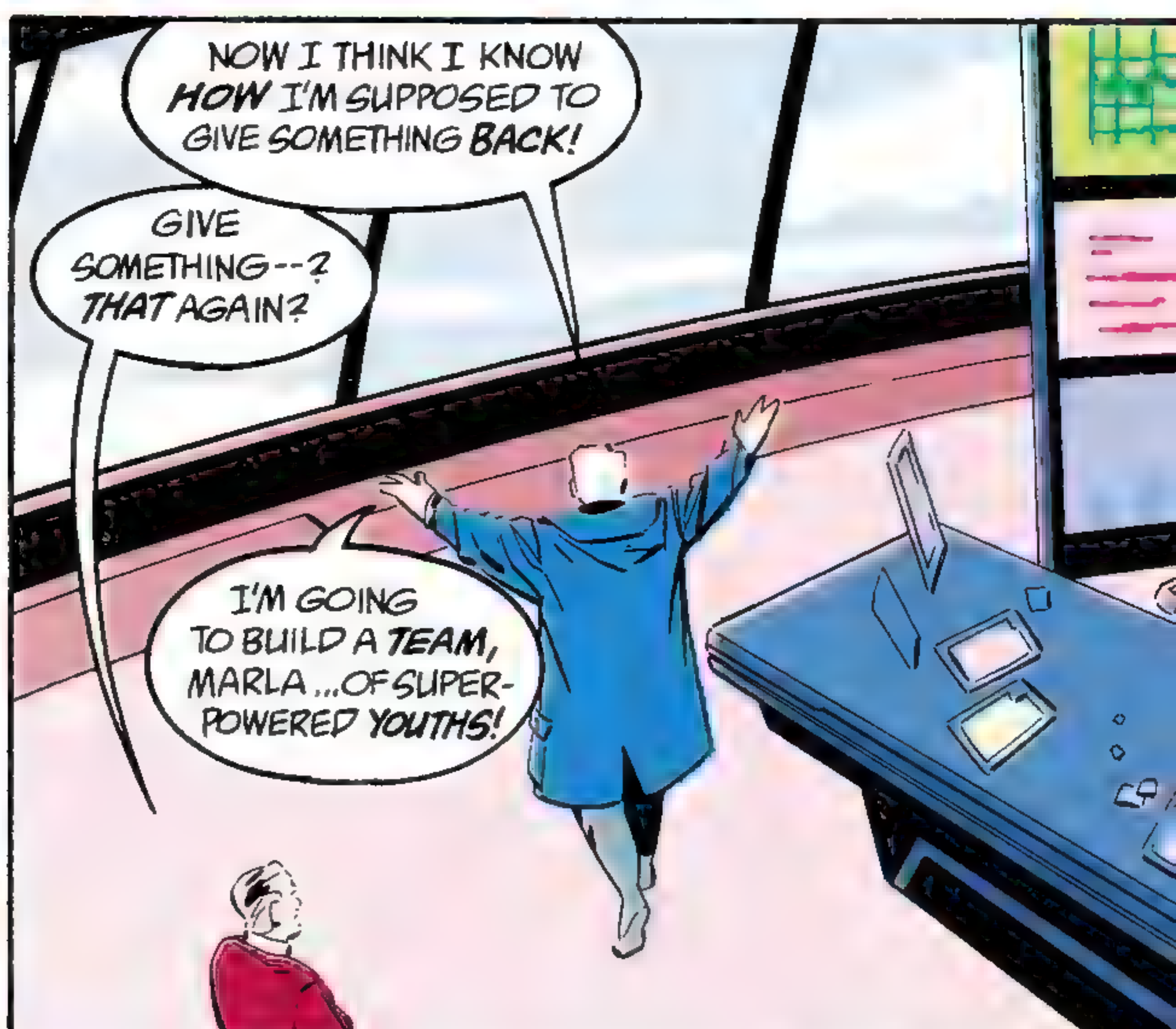


YES, YES-- WHAT
A STROKE OF
LUCK!

LUCK?
MAYBE...OR MAYBE
IT WAS A *SIGN*!

A *SIGN*?

THAT *GLEAM* IN HIS EYE
MEANT *TROUBLE*!



NOW I THINK I KNOW
HOW I'M SUPPOSED TO
GIVE SOMETHING *BACK*!

GIVE
SOMETHING--?
THAT AGAIN?

I'M GOING
TO BUILD A *TEAM*,
MARLA...OF SUPER-
POWERED *YOUTHS*!



WHAT?

IT CAN BE
DONE, VERDAMMIT!
LIKE *LAR GAND* HERE--
JUST ABOUT SAVED THE
20TH CENTURY, AND
HE WAS STILL A
TEEN-AGER!

VALOR



MARLA, I'M ENVISIONING AN ENTIRE
GROUP OF *LAR GANDS*-- AN
ORGANIZATION!

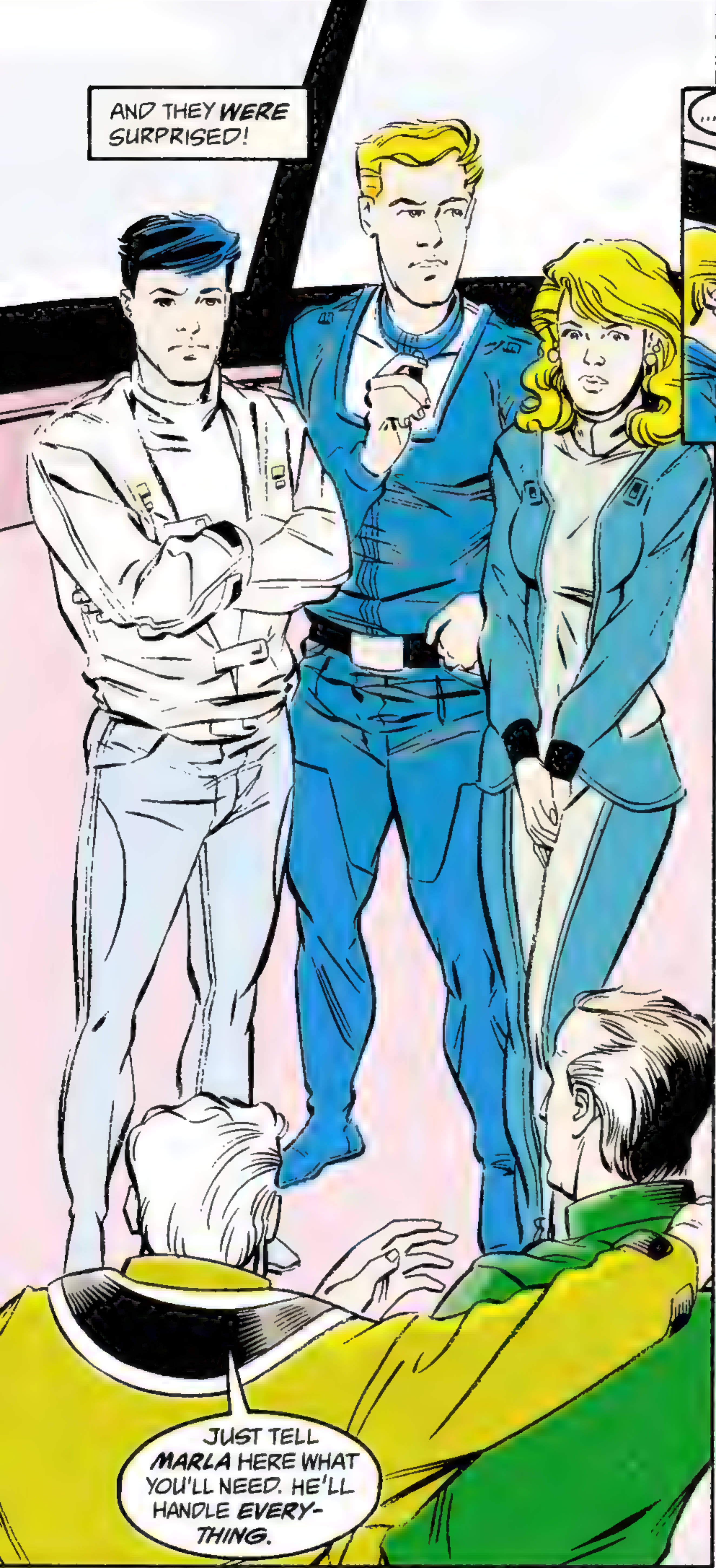
THAT
WOULD CERTAINLY
BE, UH...



AND I WANT *YOU* TO
MAKE IT *HAPPEN*!

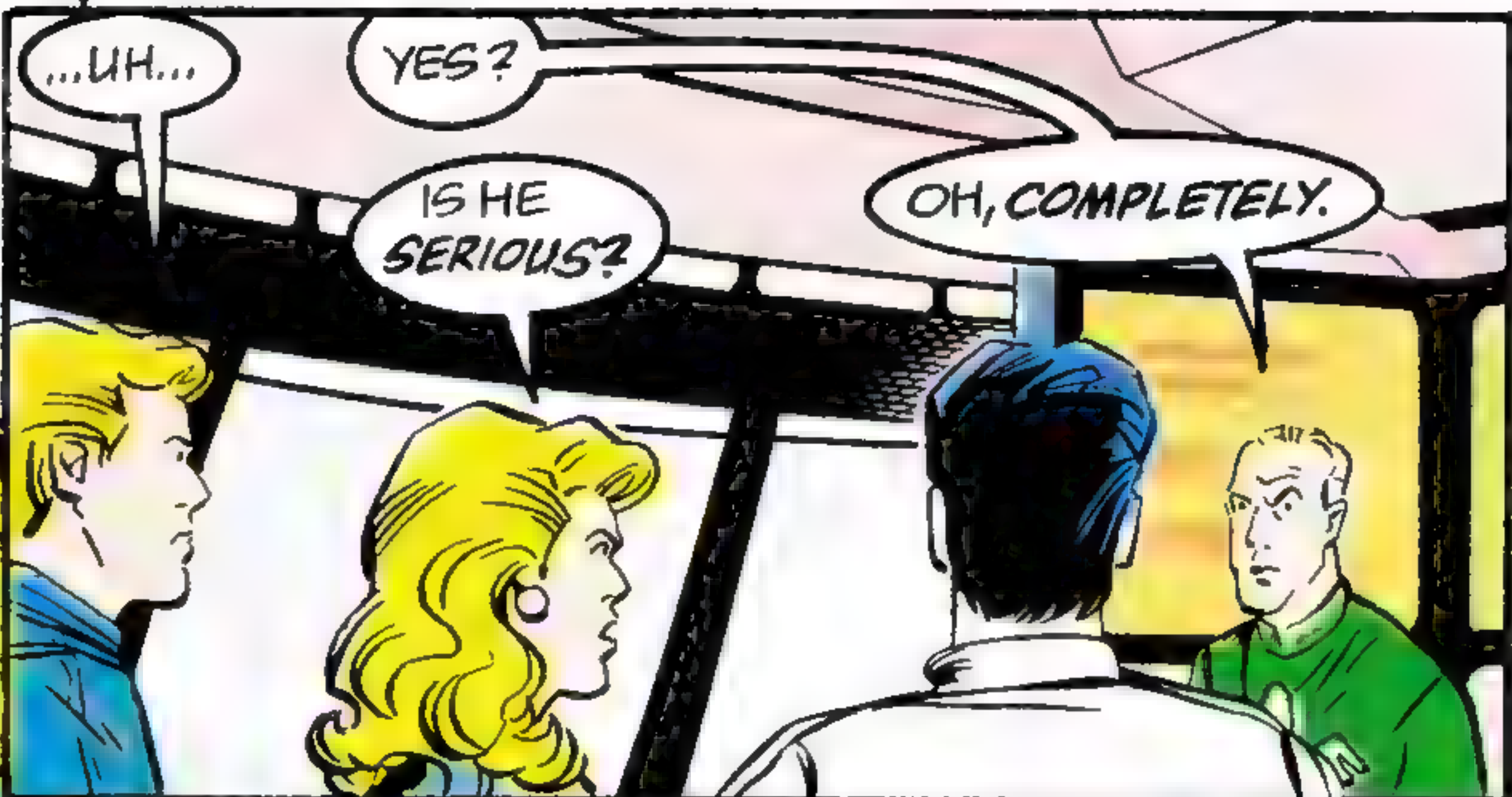
ME?!

HA-HA!
WON'T THOSE KIDS
BE *SURPRISED*!



AND THEY WERE SURPRISED!

JUST TELL MARLA HERE WHAT YOU'LL NEED. HE'LL HANDLE EVERYTHING.

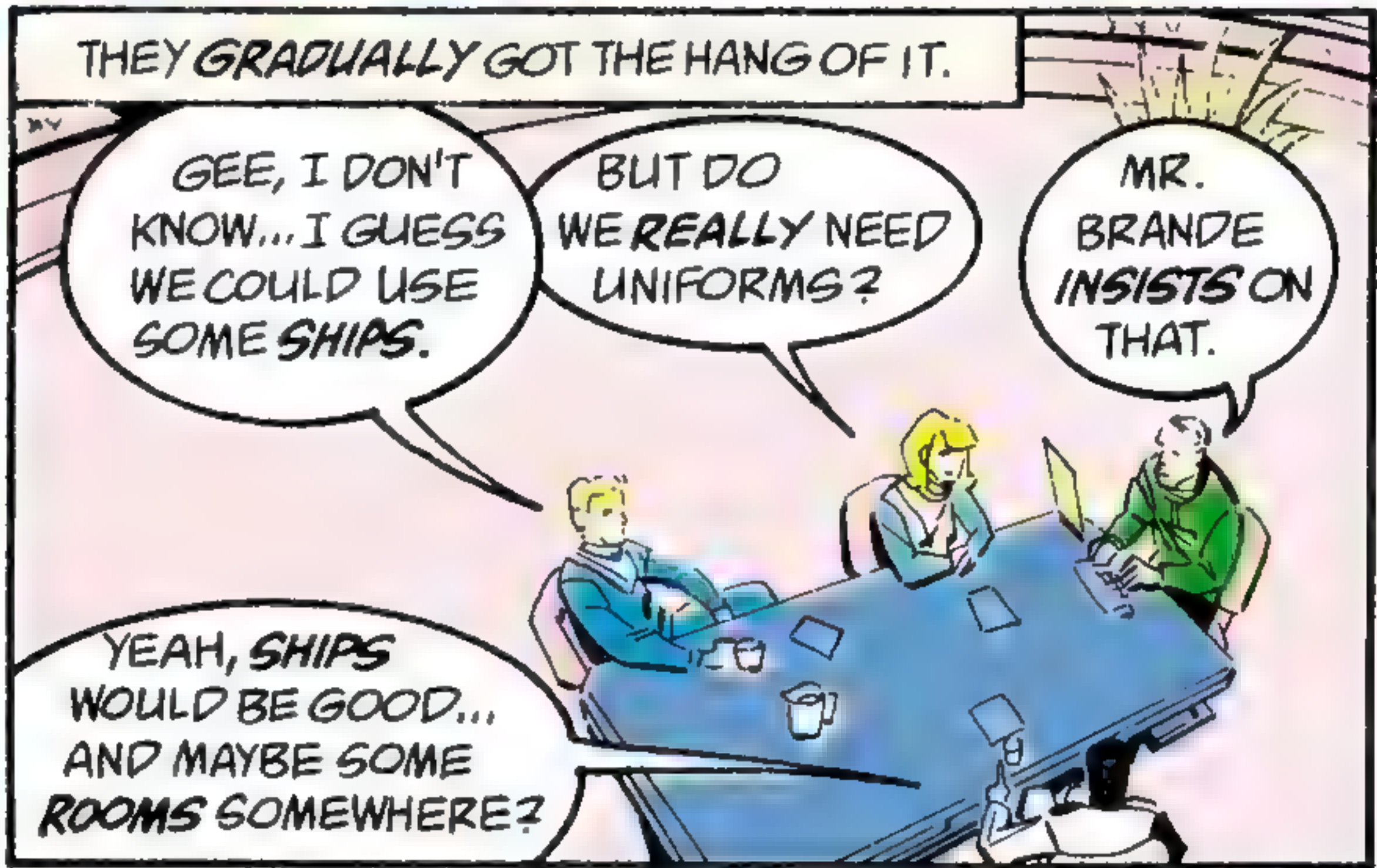


...UH...

YES?

IS HE SERIOUS?

OH, COMPLETELY.



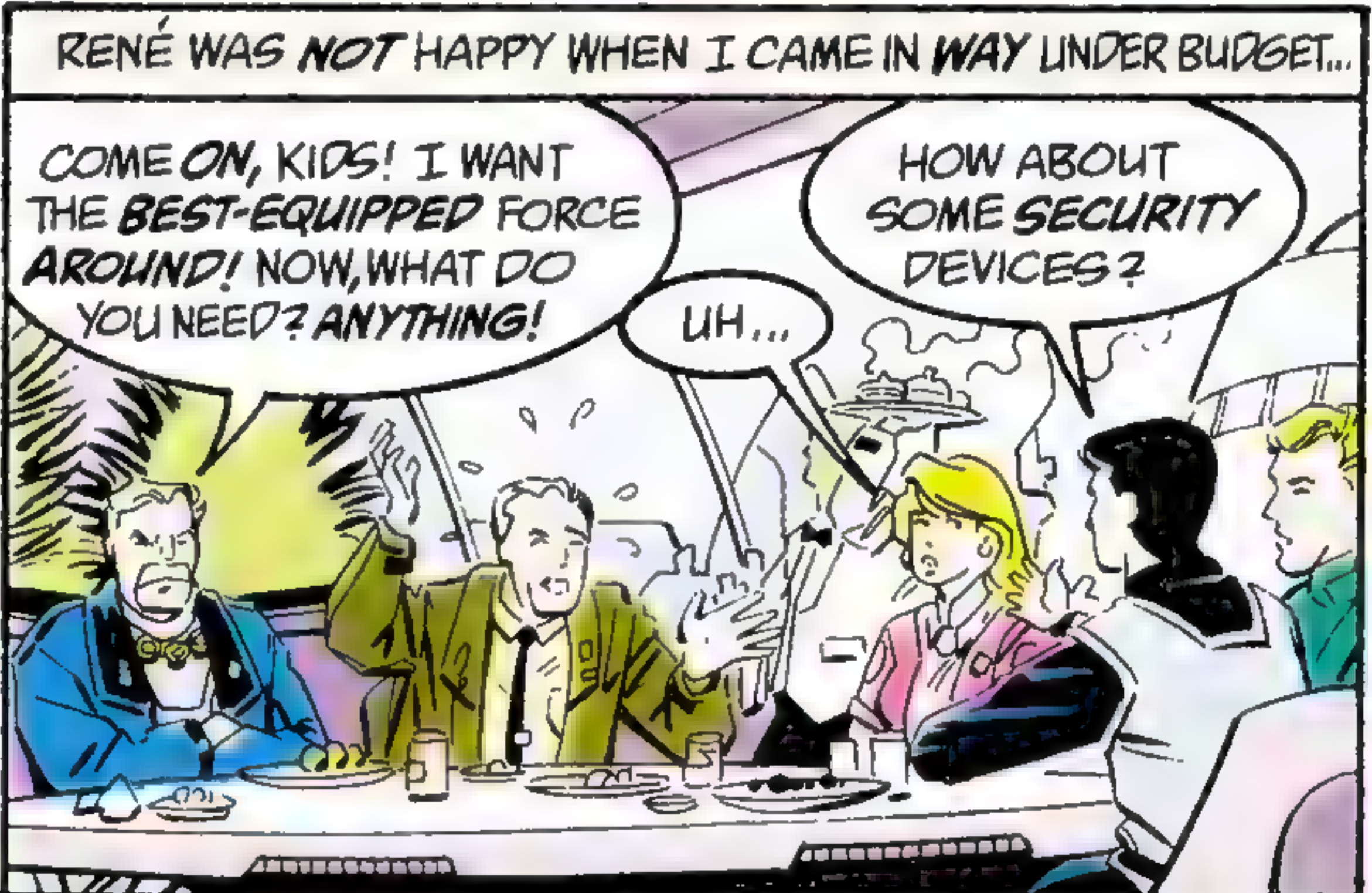
THEY GRADUALLY GOT THE HANG OF IT.

GEE, I DON'T KNOW... I GUESS WE COULD USE SOME SHIPS.

BUT DO WE REALLY NEED UNIFORMS?

MR. BRANDE INSISTS ON THAT.

YEAH, SHIPS WOULD BE GOOD... AND MAYBE SOME ROOMS SOMEWHERE?

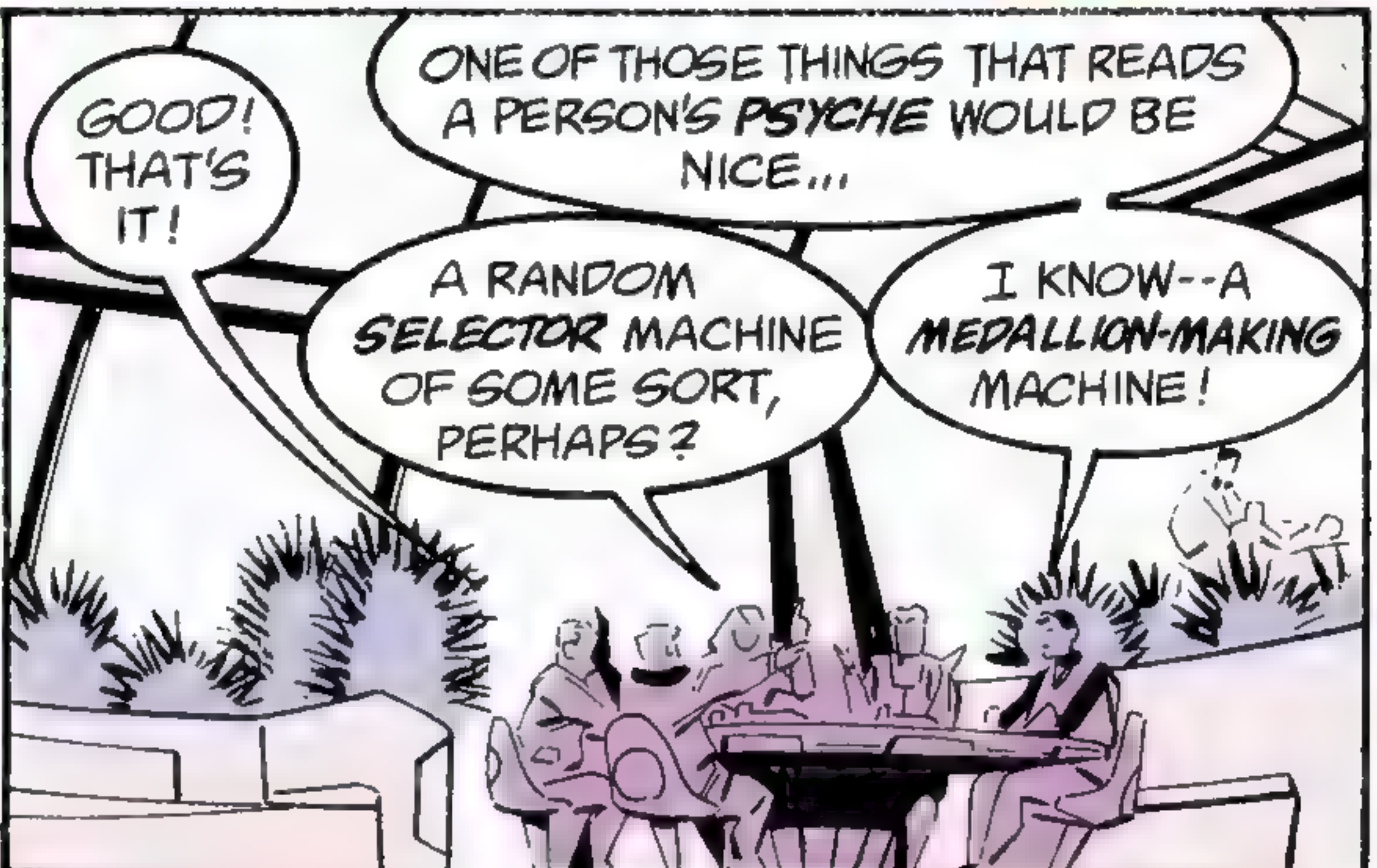


RENÉ WAS NOT HAPPY WHEN I CAME IN WAY UNDER BUDGET...

COME ON, KIDS! I WANT THE BEST-EQUIPPED FORCE AROUND! NOW, WHAT DO YOU NEED? ANYTHING!

HOW ABOUT SOME SECURITY DEVICES?

UH...



GOOD! THAT'S IT!

ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT READS A PERSON'S PSYCHE WOULD BE NICE...

A RANDOM SELECTOR MACHINE OF SOME SORT, PERHAPS?

I KNOW--A MEDALLION-MAKING MACHINE!

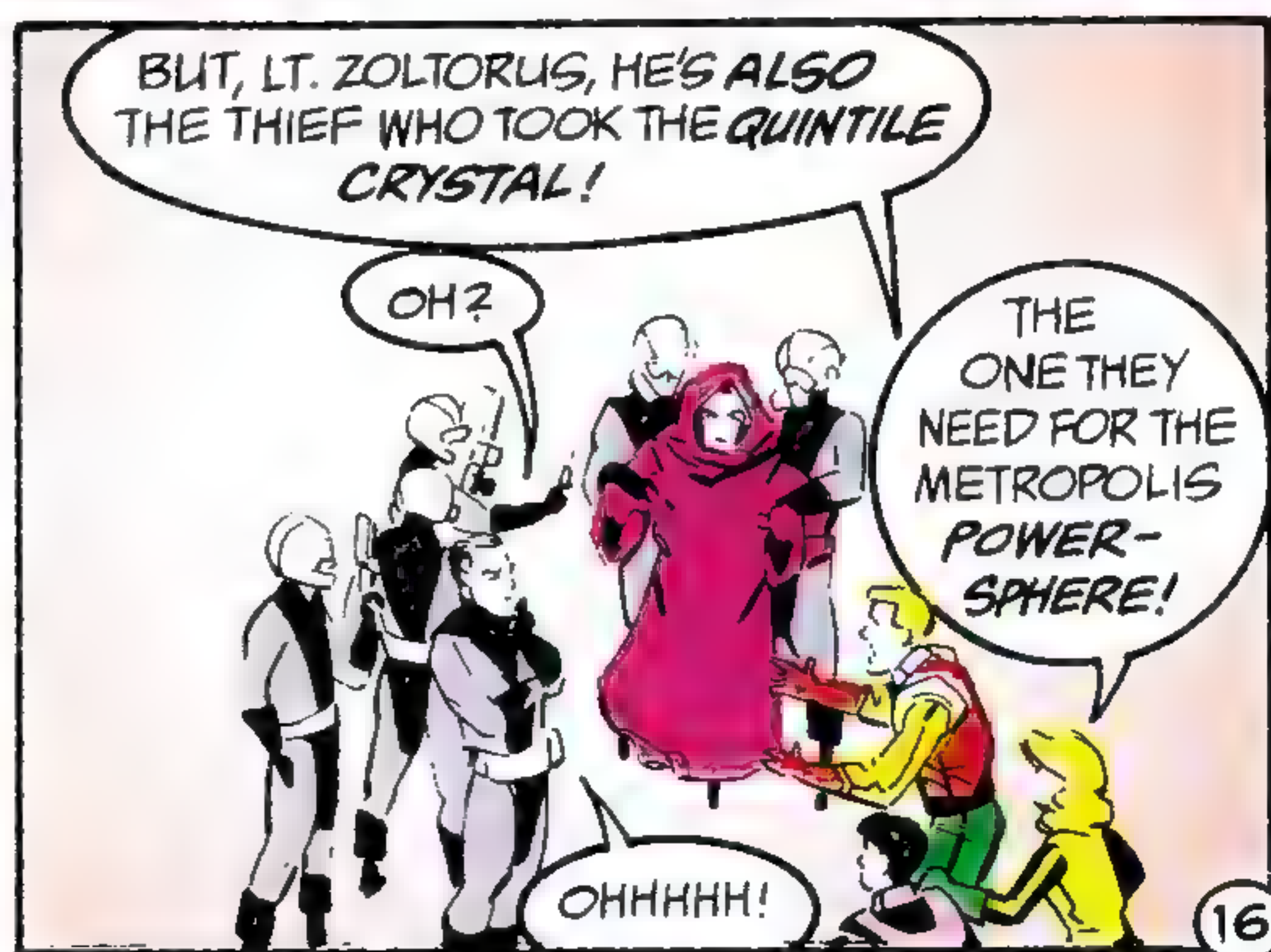
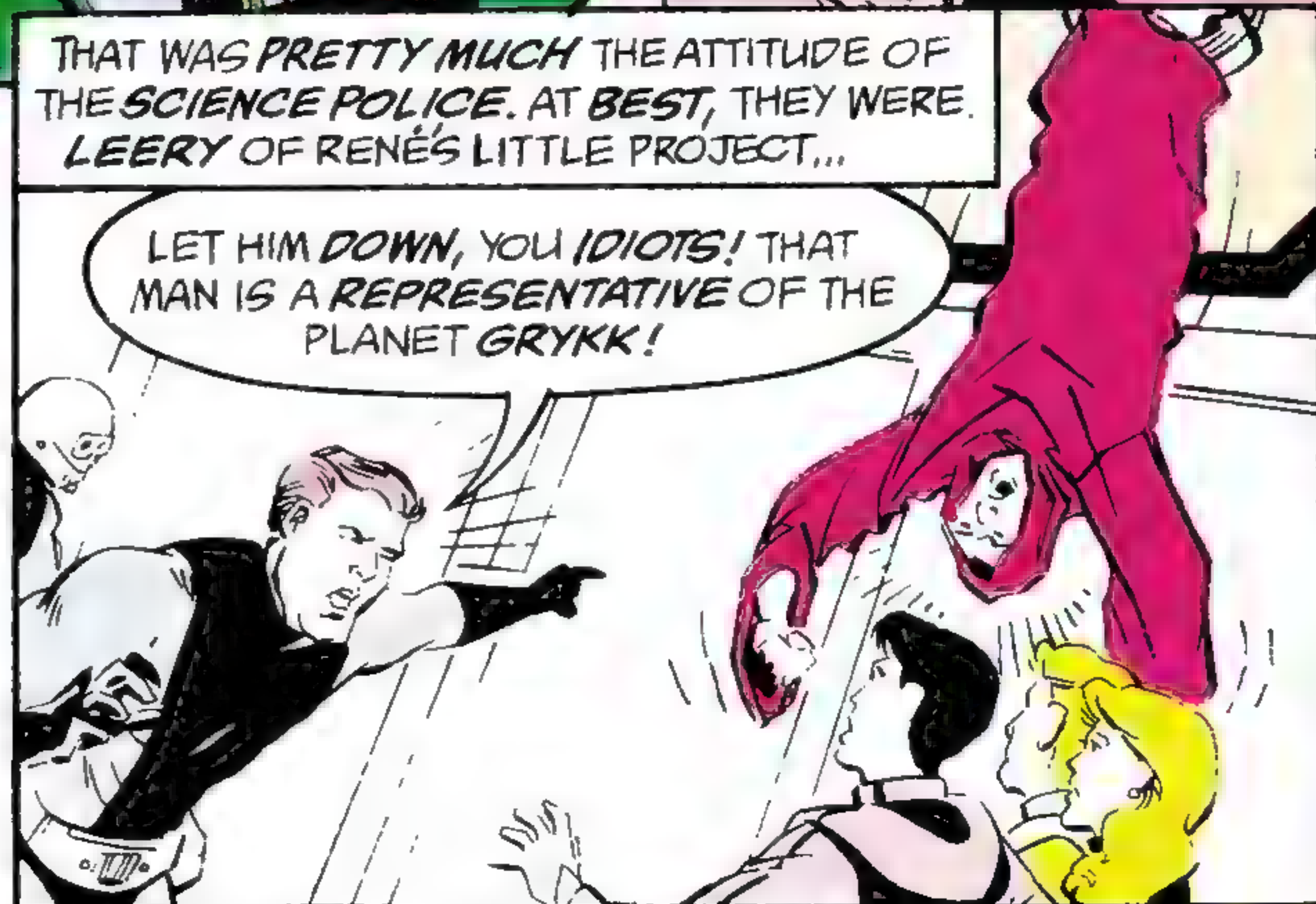
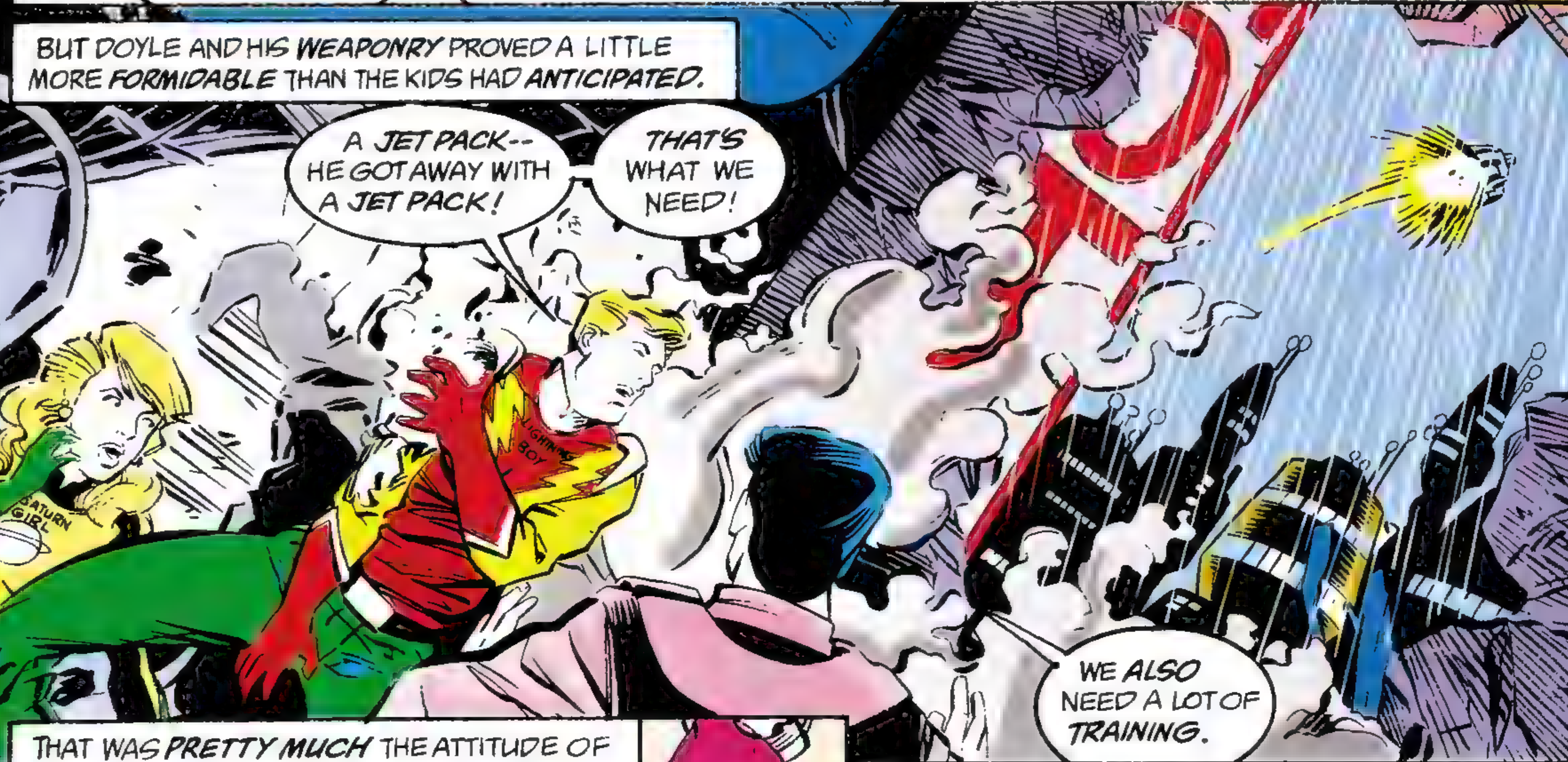
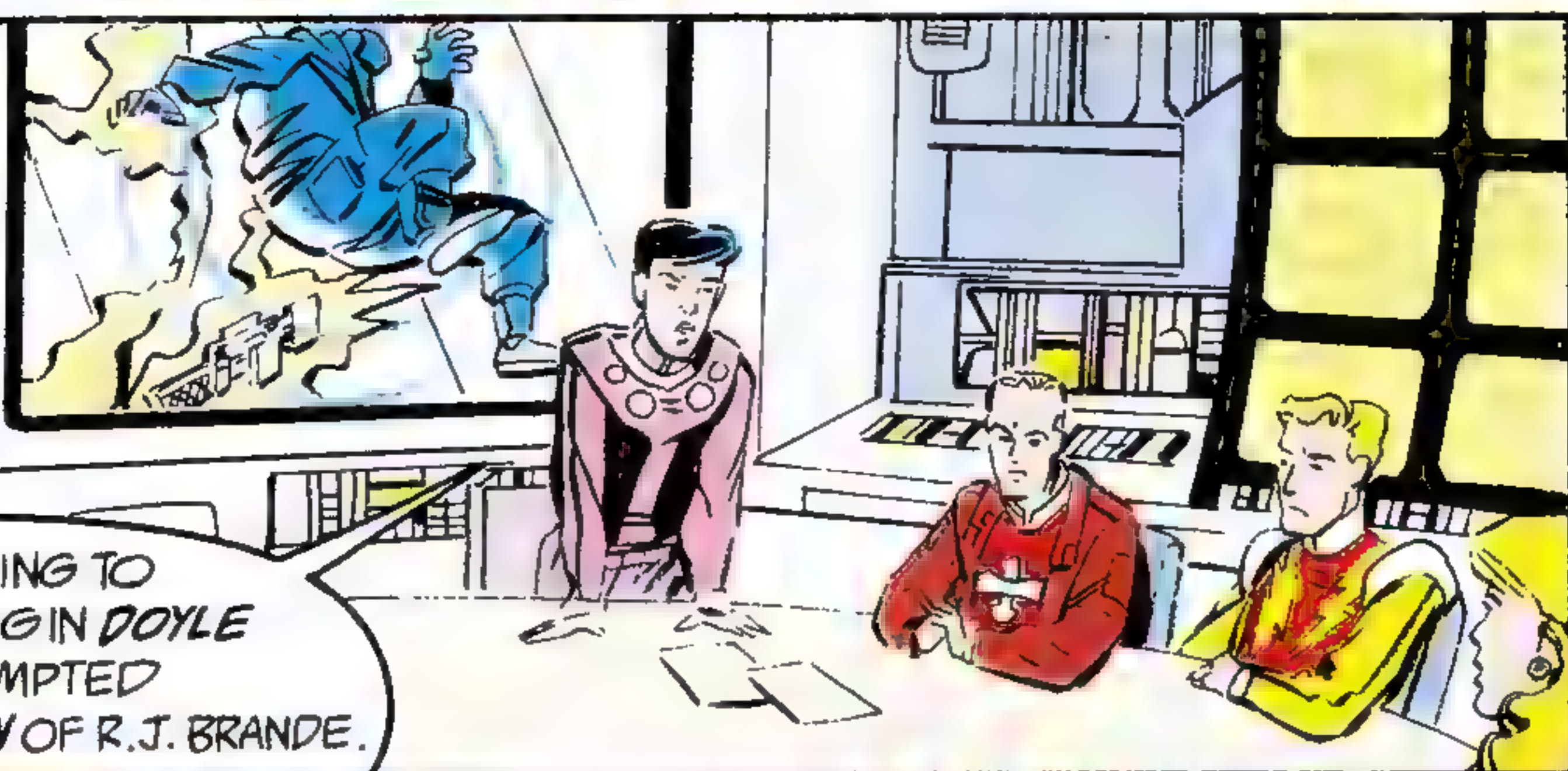
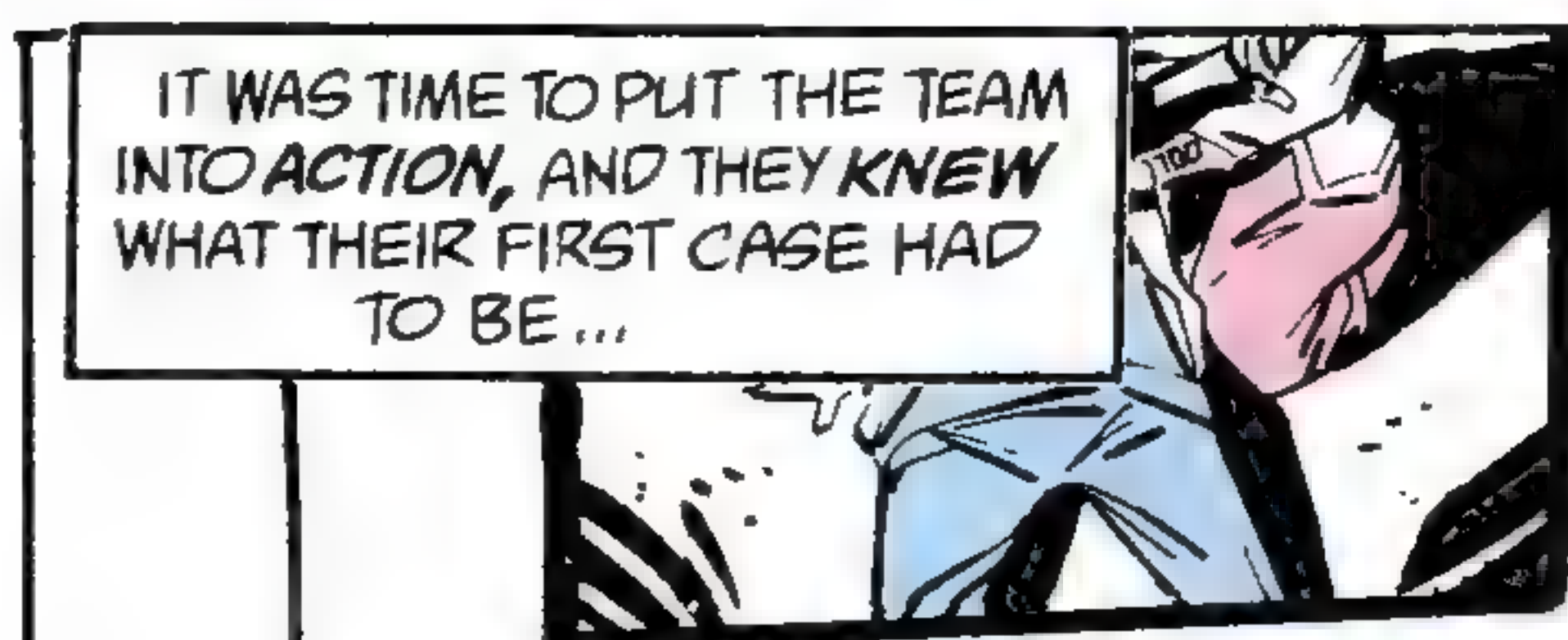


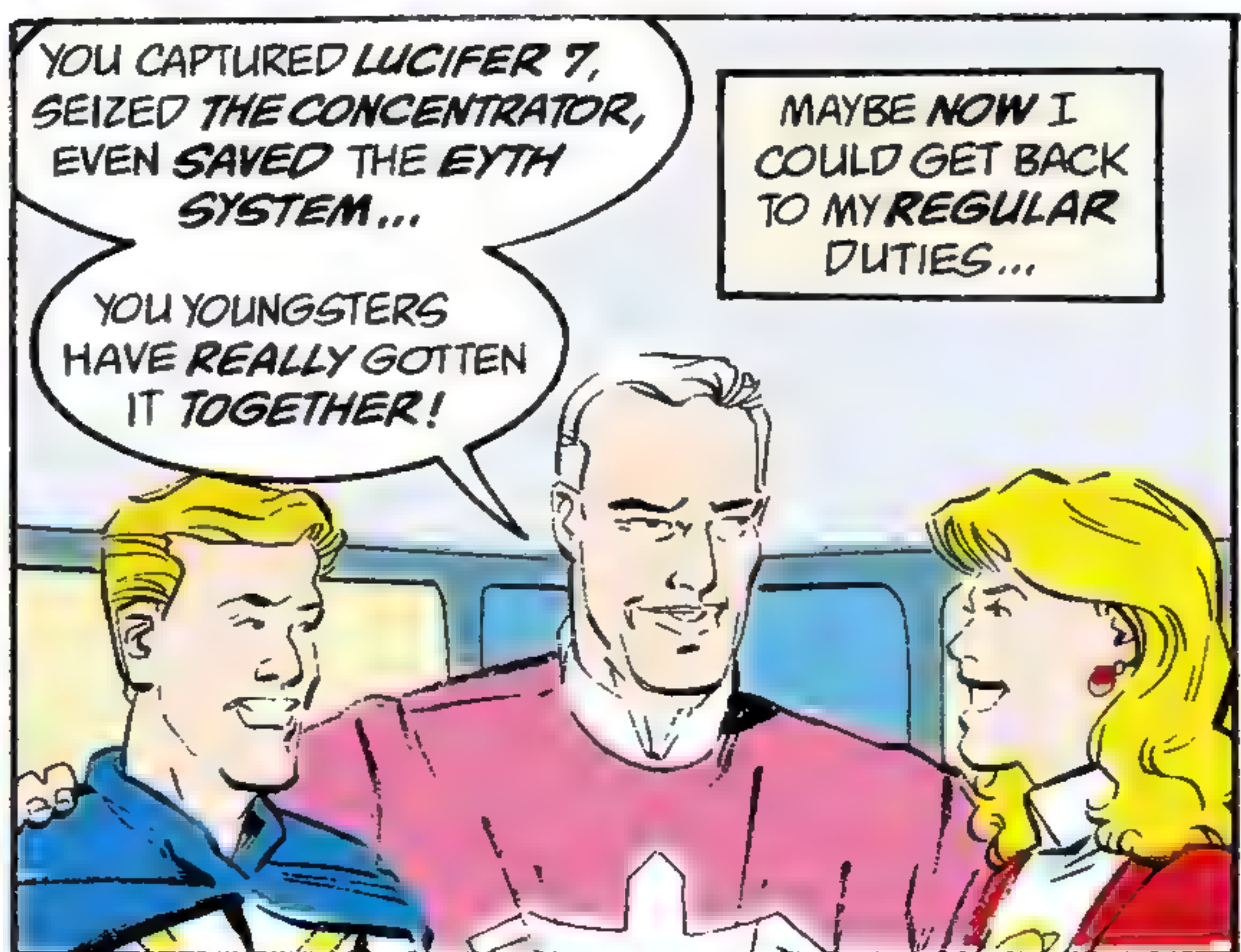
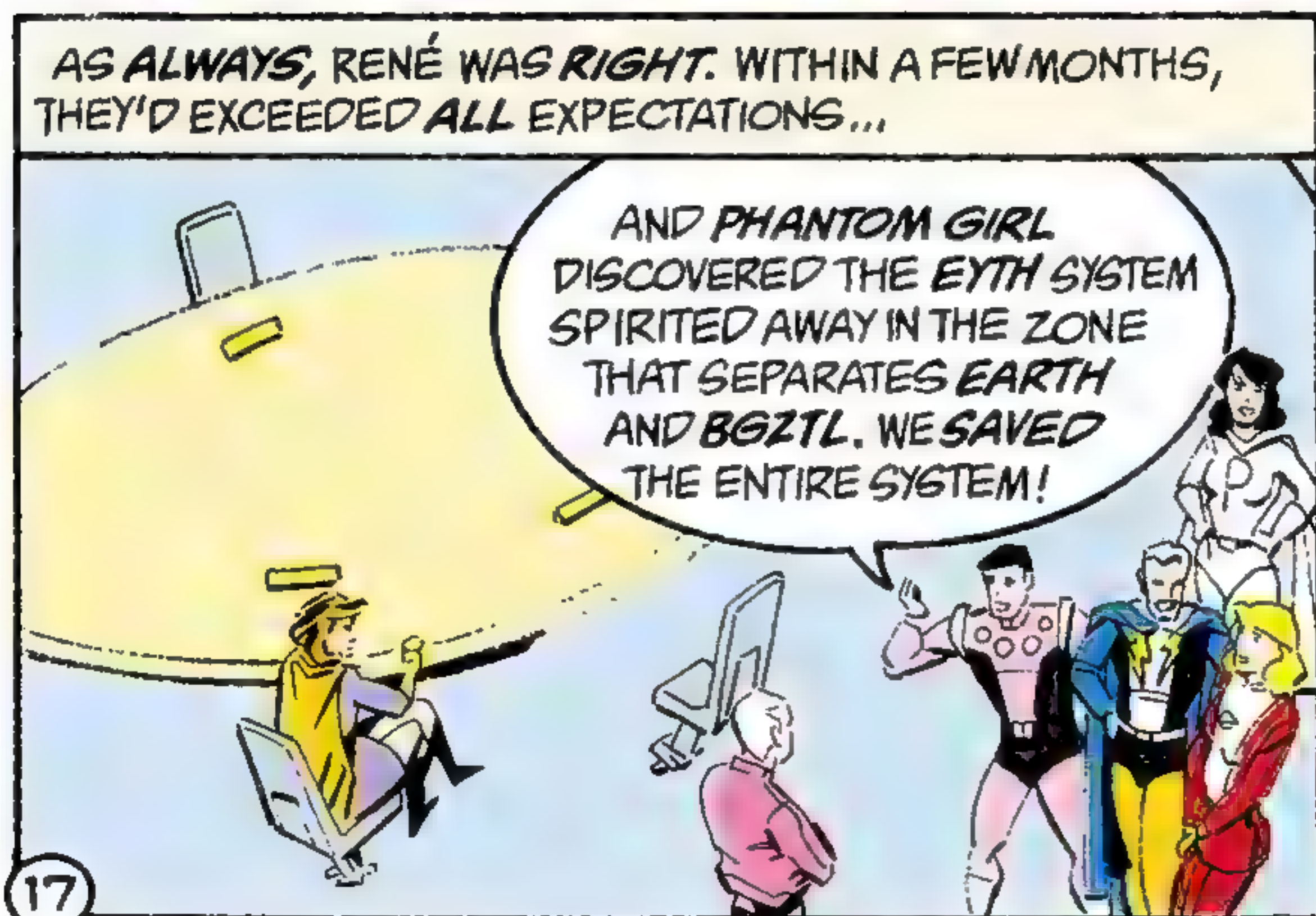
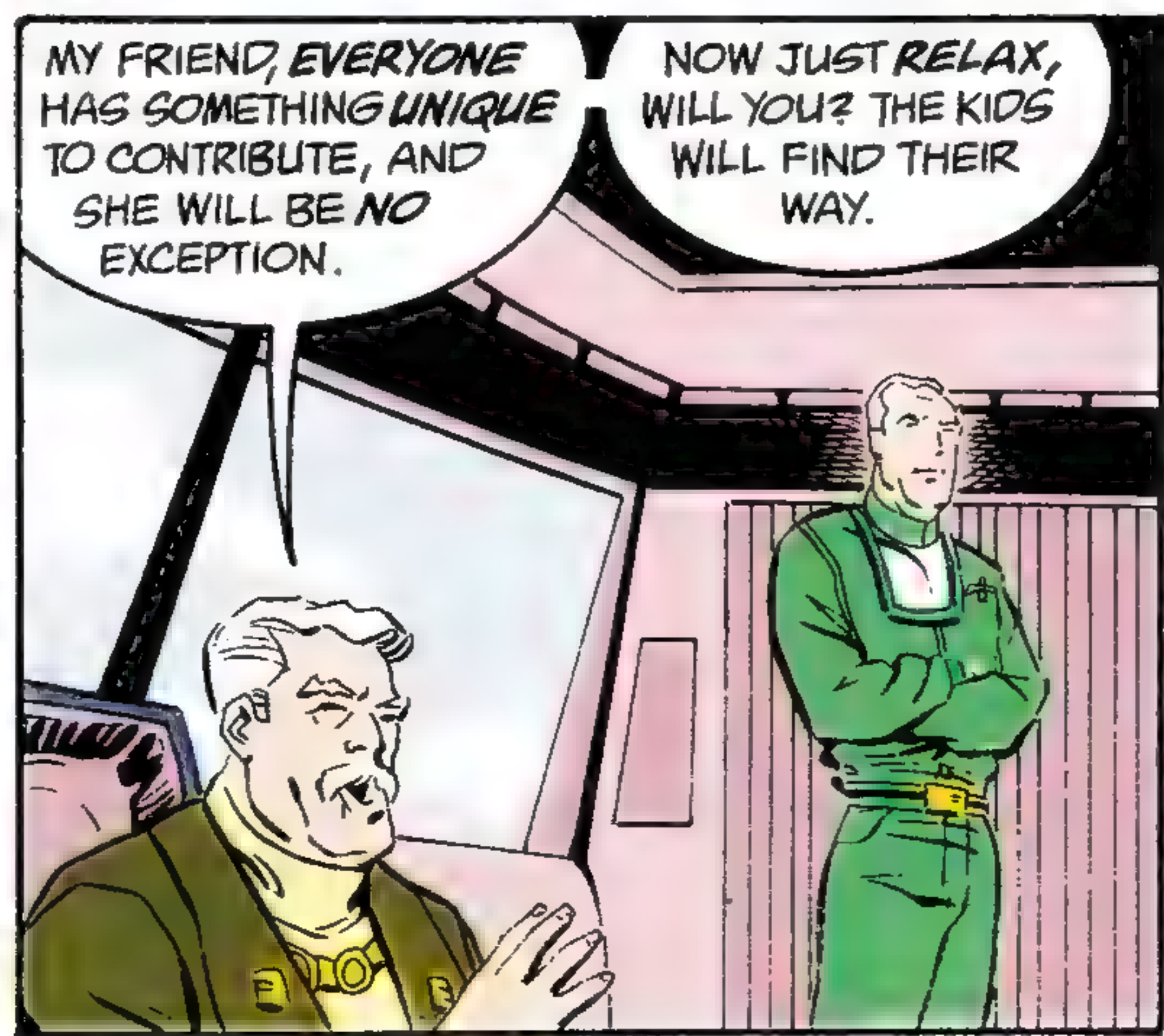
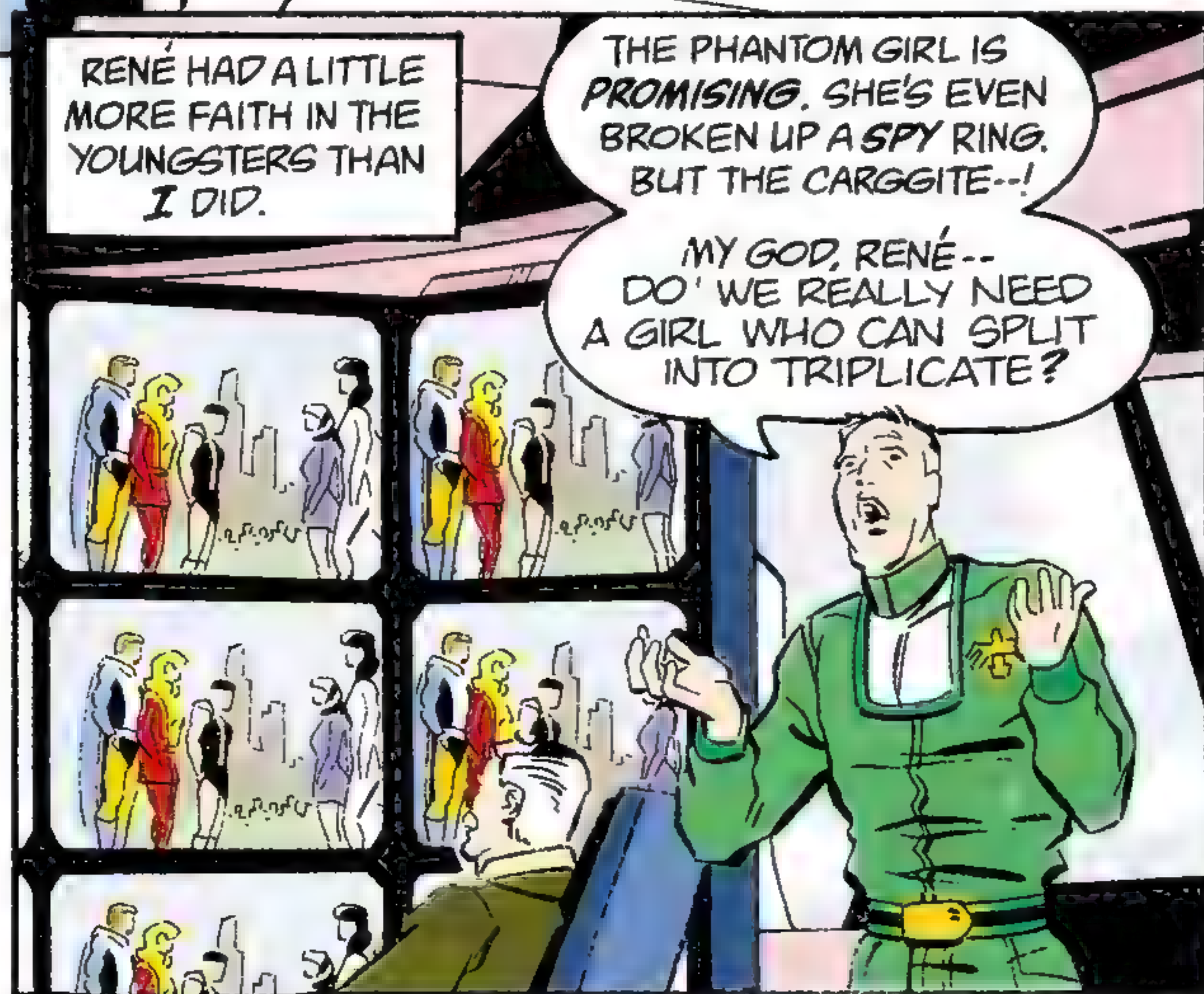
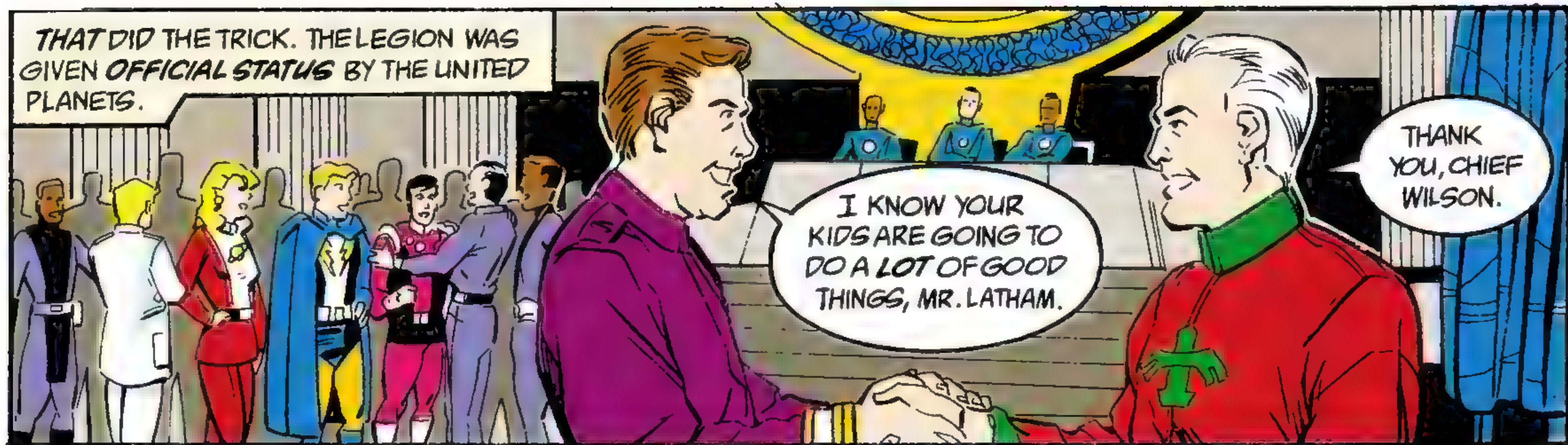
UNFORTUNATELY, NOTHING CAME OUT RIGHT...

PINK? I THOUGHT I ASKED FOR PALE SCARLET!

UH, I'M SORRY, MARLA, BUT THE NAMES ACROSS THE CHEST? THEY'VE GOT TO GO!

BUT THAT IS PALE SCARLET... AND YOU DON'T LIKE THE NAMES?





...OR MAYBE NOT.

MARLA, HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT RECRUITING A DURLAN FOR OUR LITTLE GROUP?

IT'S FUNNY YOU SHOULD SUGGEST THAT! I WAS JUST THINKING HOW IT COULD COUNTERACT THE PREJUDICE THEY FACE.

I...uh...HAVE A PARTICULAR CANDIDATE IN MIND...

YOU'VE GOT THAT GLEAM IN YOUR EYE AGAIN, RENÉ...

HIS NAME WAS REEP DAGGLE. I ARRANGED TO MEET HIM IN THE NINE WORLDS' ICE CREAM BAR...

I'M TOLD YOU DO A LOT OF VOLUNTEER WORK, REEP.

YEAH, SORTA.

FROM WHAT I HEAR, YOU'RE A REGULAR HERO-- HELPING THE POOR, PITCHING IN AT ORPHANAGES, VISITING HOSPITALS...

JUST TRYING TO HELP OUT A LITTLE.

WELL, WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW IS WHY?

IT'S...uh...KIND OF PERSONAL, ACTUALLY.

I SUPPOSE THE PREJUDICE YOU'VE FOUND AGAINST DURLANS REALLY HURTS. YOU'RE PROBABLY TRYING TO DO YOUR BEST TO OVERCOME THAT BIGOTRY.

UH, KINDA, BUT NOT REALLY...

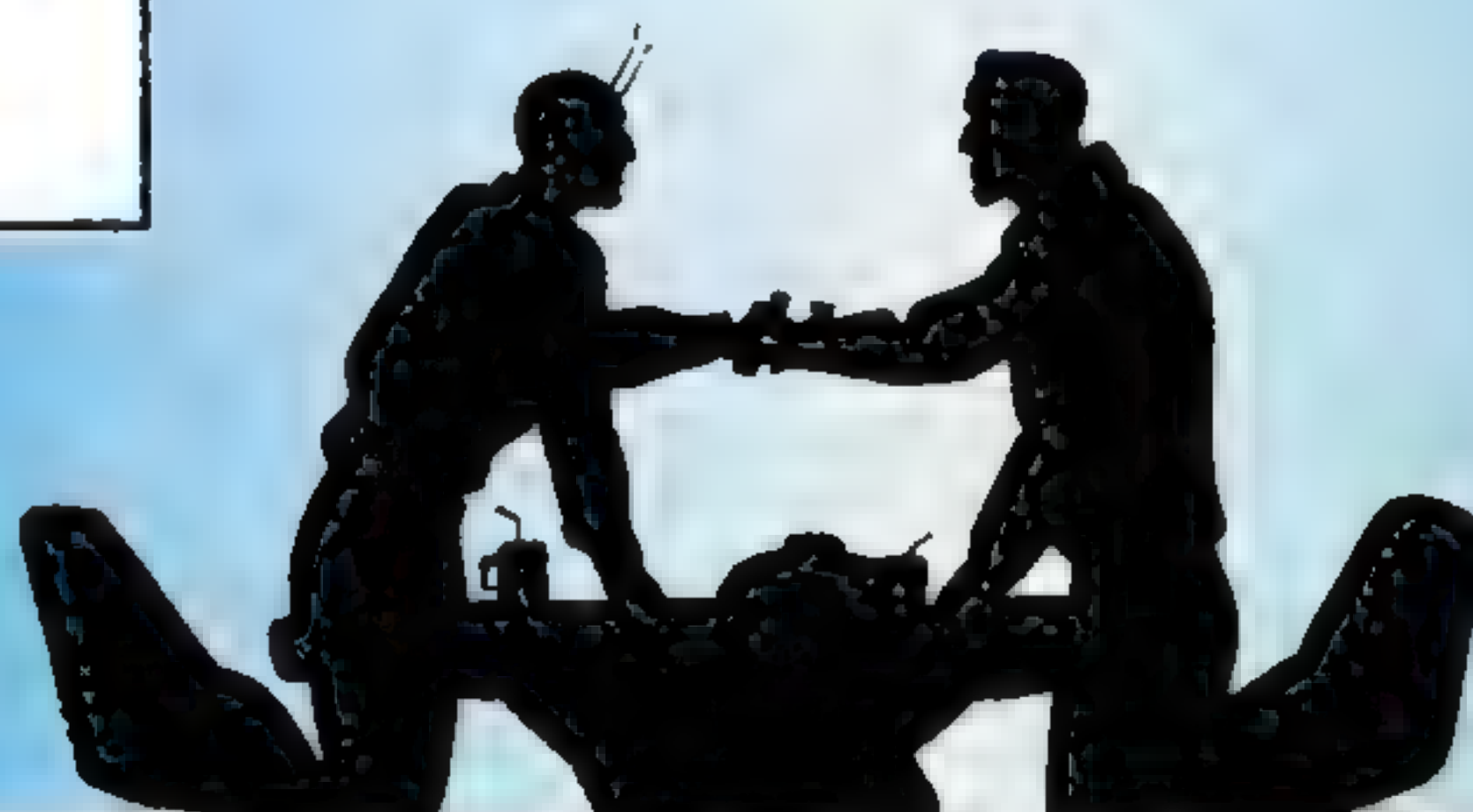
OH?

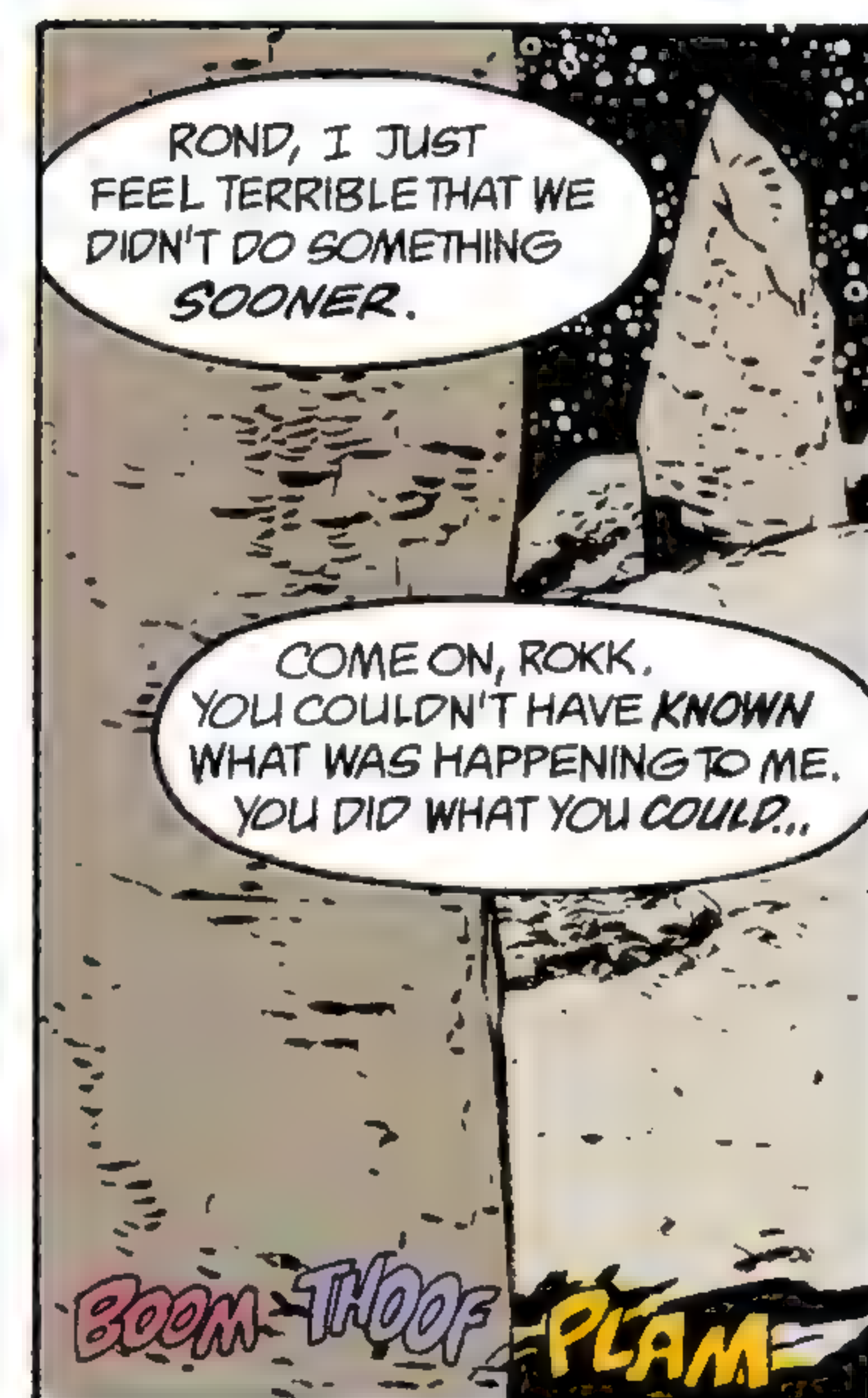
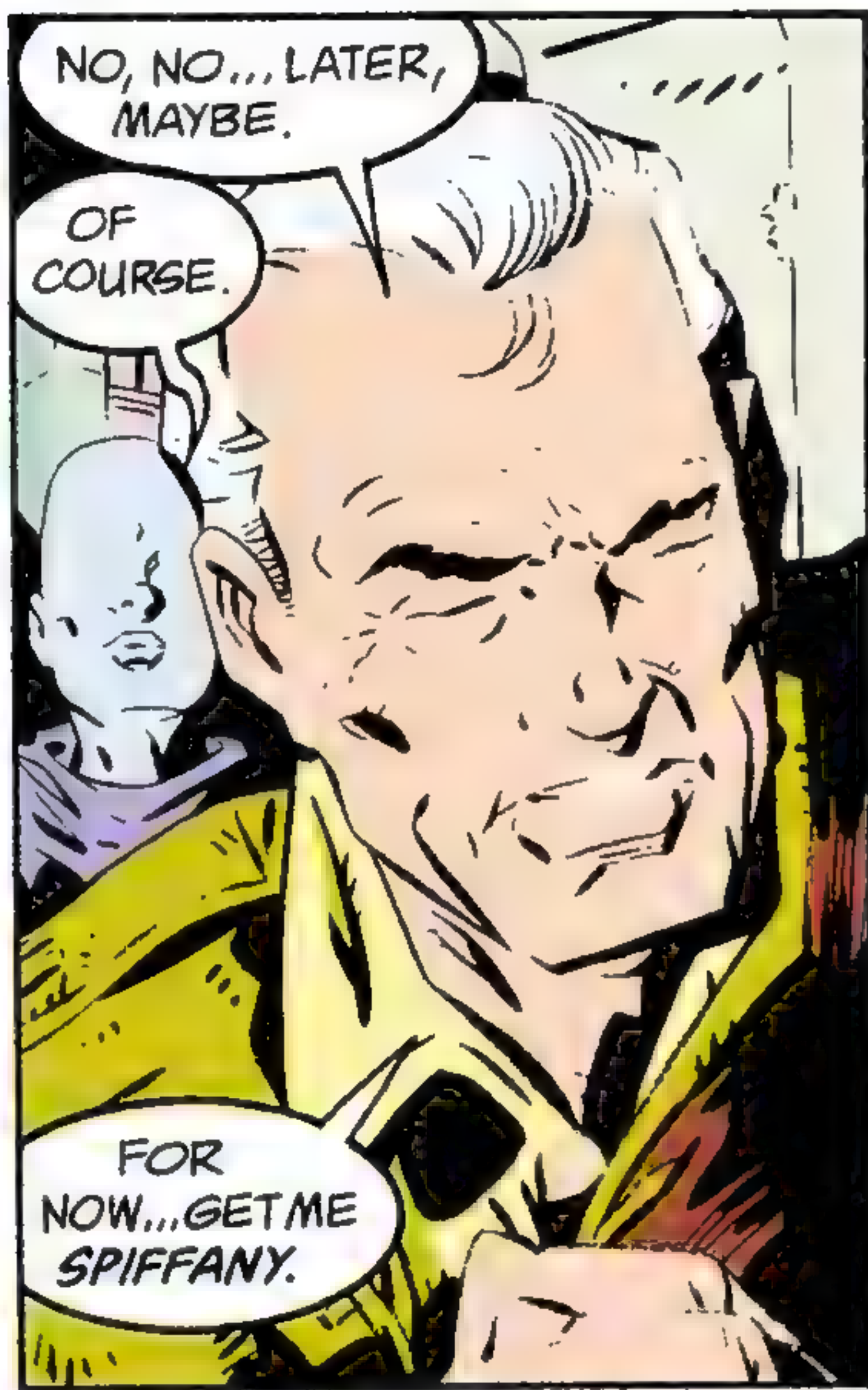
IT'S JUST THAT...uh, IT'S NOT THE DURLANS THAT ARE BEING HURT BY THE PREJUDICE.

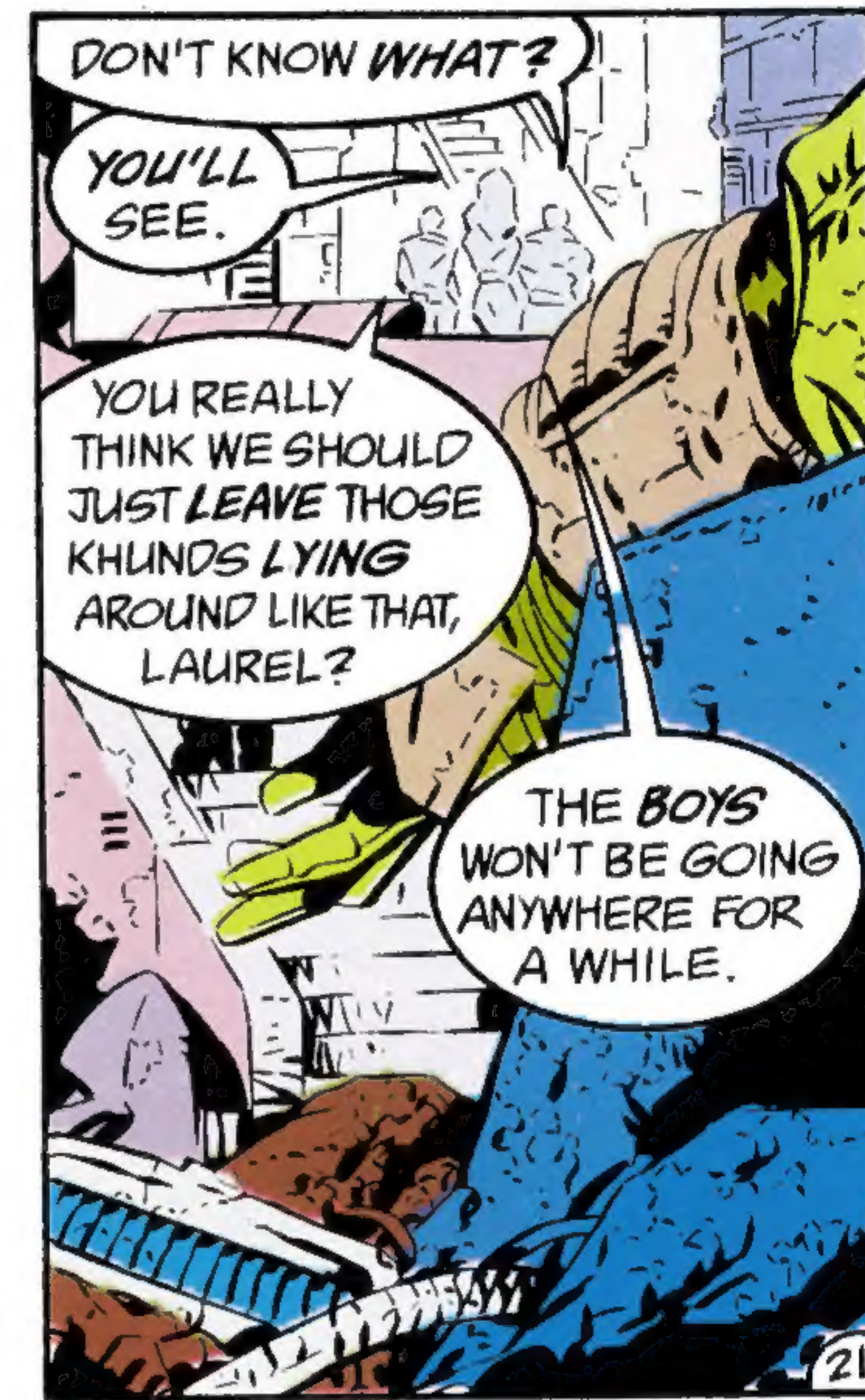
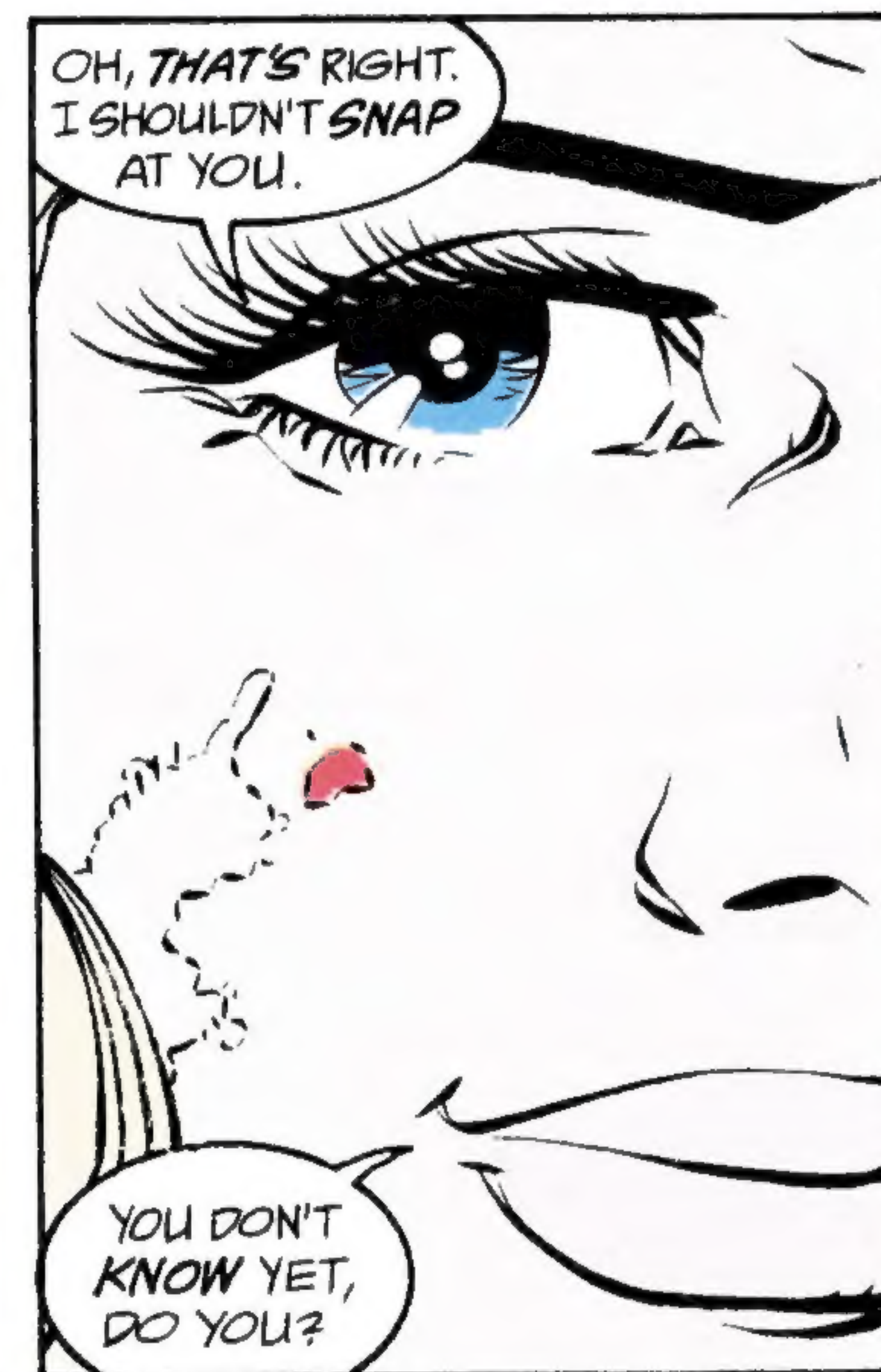


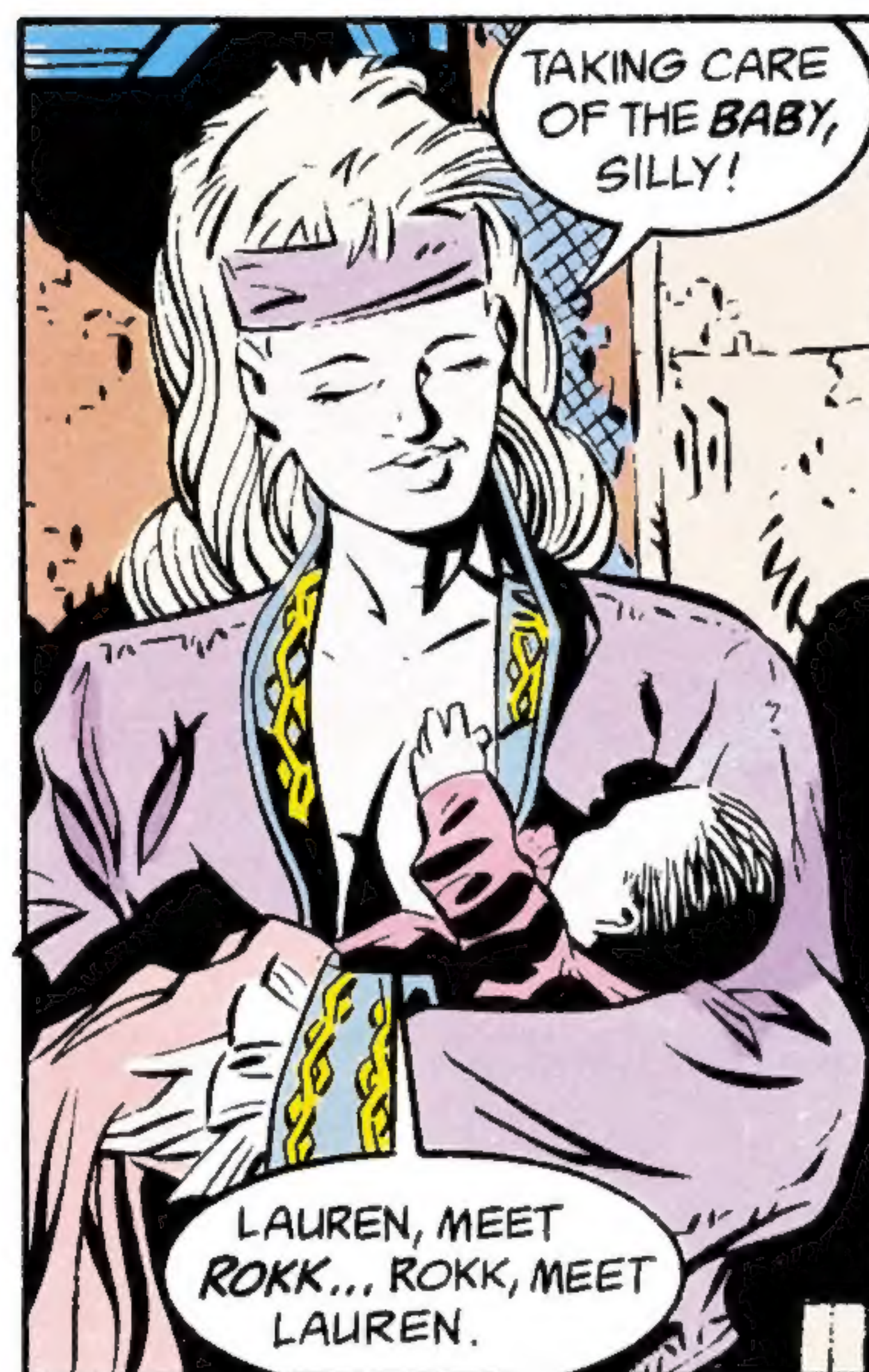
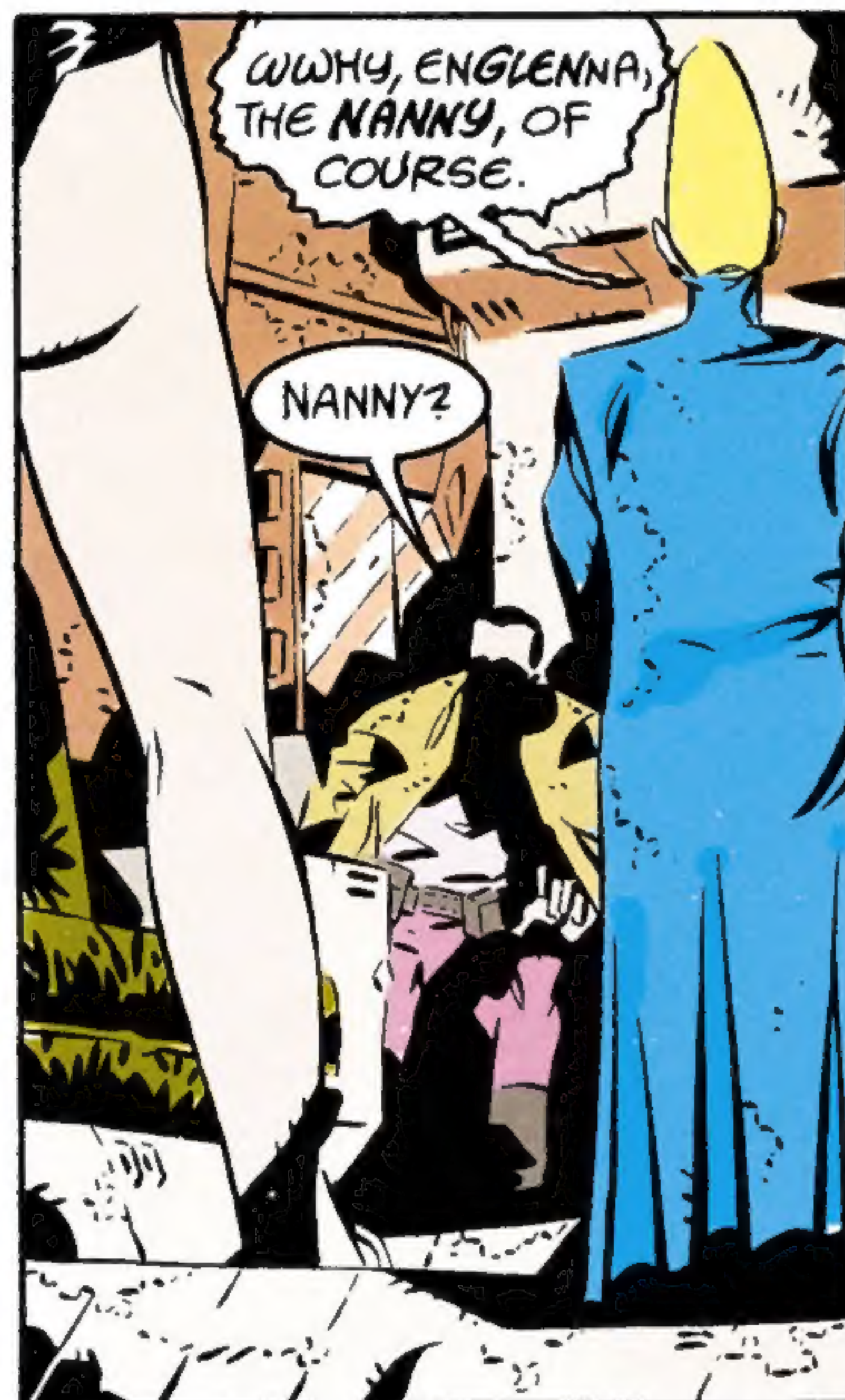
IT WAS GREAT TO SEE THAT SHY, YOUNG DURLAN COME OUT OF HIS SHELL. SOMEHOW HE REMINDED ME OF ANOTHER SCARED, SHY DURLAN I'D MET MANY YEARS **EARLIER**...

...BUT NO... THEY **COULDN'T** BE CONNECTED...









WHEN YOU WISH UPON A STAR . . .

The "Dream-Come-True" Rise of R.J. Brande

Assets Magazine, Feb. 8, 2972
By Via Edwards



René Jacques Brande became one of the richest men in the U.P. the way a businessman is supposed to do it—through sound instincts, brilliant inspiration, and a lot of sweat.

When Brande and his cousin Doyle formed Brande Industries (BI) in 2959, their assets included little more than a few obscure patents they'd shrewdly bought up in the Stellar Sciences.

But they had a vision and a willingness to work hard enough to make it happen. Together they amassed one of the quickest fortunes in galactic history, rising within 12 years to claim the number-six spot on the Assets 5000 list of largest U.P. businesses.

R.J. Brande himself dismisses the amazing success story to "bluster, stubbornness, and a lot of luck." But his associates and rivals view things differently.

"When you deal with R.J. Brande, you immediately know the man would have been a huge success at whatever he tried," comments Horace Spiffany, chairman of UPGem. "The right person at the right time? Hell, he's the right person at *any* time."

Gail Ken, Chairwoman of Evolution Publishers, says, "It's not that he works harder or is more intelligent than anyone else—all of which is true. It's his *values* that separate Brande from the rest. Integrity is what you look for in a business associate, and nobody beats Brande on that score."

But others in the business community are less impressed. Leland McCauley commented through a spokesman that he believes Brande's lustrous image will eventually be tarnished. He points out that Brande and his cousin have been extremely secretive about their lives prior to the formation of Brande Industries.

Indeed, almost nothing is known about the cousins prior to 2959. Company biographies say they grew up on an isolated colony in the Lallorian Territories. After their families were decimated by an unspecified plague, the pair entered U.P. space to seek their fortunes.

Exactly how they went from virtual poverty to billionaire status isn't fully comprehended by the business community, but observers generally attribute the remarkable story to R.J.'s genius for making the best of the most adverse situations and his passion for taking rough-edged, unwanted pieces and polishing them into formidable, profitable combinations.

To those attributes, cousin Doyle added a "street-tough" savvy that proved crucial in starting their business when the cousins showed up in U.P. space.

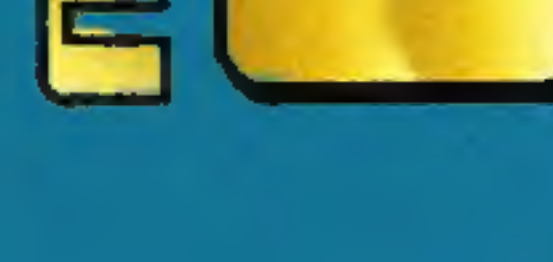
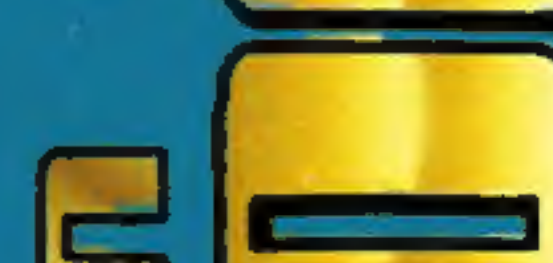
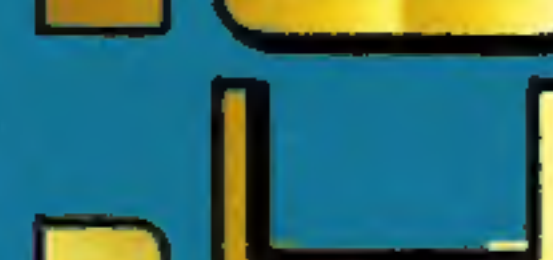
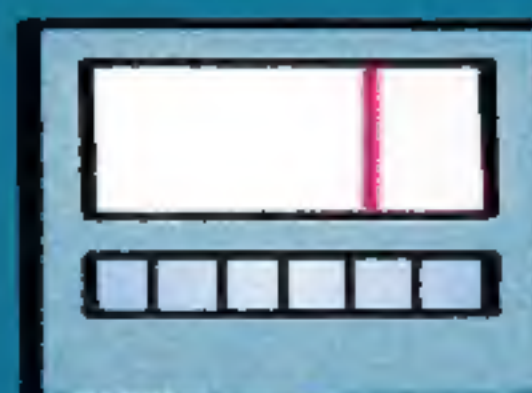
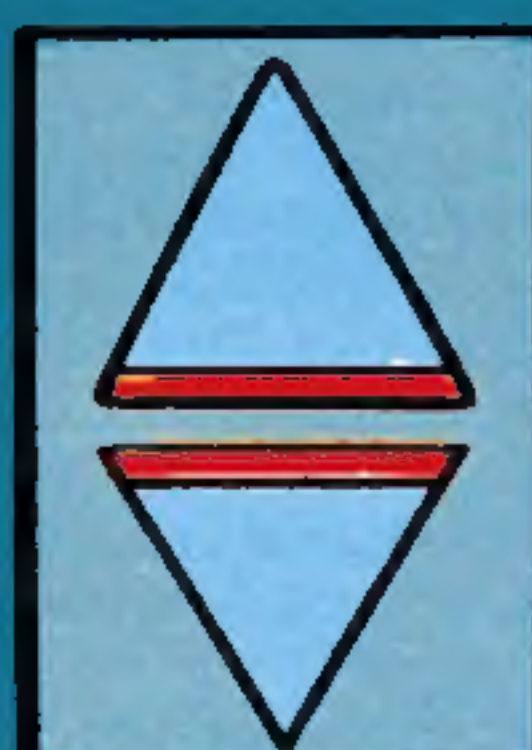
After Doyle's rough-and-ready shipping business began to generate some seed money, the cousins' next step was to research obscure and unused patents. R.J., who'd quickly mastered the Stellar Sciences, was able to combine currently dormant techniques for both accumulating massive gases and igniting those gases, creating the new industry of star-birthing.

Right from the start, the new technique was a tremendous success. The ignition of the three "Stepping Stone" stars to the isolated colonies in the Rimbor System immediately brought BI enough cash to pay off all of its investors and acquire the additional capital needed to meet a sudden, huge demand for artificial stars.

BI was on its way. Even as the need for new stars has subsided, the company has shrewdly diversified its operations and invested its assets.

BI subsidiaries are leading suppliers of anti-grav belts, communications systems, and energy plants.

Brande also has his eye on the future. He's a key financier of time-travel research and tele-psychic techniques being researched on Titan. "Only two great frontiers are left," he's been quoted as saying, "time and the mind." As those frontiers are more fully explored, Brande intends to be involved in the pioneering work.



Highest Security Clearance. High Commander's Eyes Only.

To: King Jonn, Pasnic, High Commander, United Resistance Militia
From: Somi Gan, Lallor, Colonel, United Resistance Militia



Your Majesty:

We have managed to briefly break the Khund Intelligence code, which enabled us to intercept the following excerpt of a Khund transmission:

"... interference by the Daxamite she-demon Laurel Gand has reached intolerable levels. She has stalled our holy crusade for nearly a term, and once again the human worms crawl through the soil of worlds that were rightfully conquered by our brave armies. There's even a chance the Lallorian sector could be stolen from us as well, and that is unthinkable.

Her demonic rampages have ravaged our forces at a cost of billions. But no price tag can be placed on the damage being wreaked in our souls by this she-demon, who uses her diabolical powers to disgrace the brave armies' virility. Not only does this grotesquery refuse to fight us in a male guise, she further emasculates us by sparing our lives in battle and taking our valiant soldiers prisoner.

Our priests advise that the Daxamite is certainly a nemesis sent directly from the demon womb itself to test our worthiness, and must be forced into submission at all costs and through any means.

Therefore: High Command is suspending all codes of behavior in any attack on Laurel Gand. The death penalty for hostage-taking, even of women, is lifted and those tactics are now sanctioned and encouraged.

Covert Operations must seize upon the she-demon's one exposed flank—the child. All agents will concentrate their efforts on abducting the girl and using her as a weapon against our demonic nemesis.

Glorious will be the rewards for the brave soldiers who seize the child of the nemesis. Those exalted heroes will be granted immediate promotion to the rank of general, a "Preferred" ranking on all Non-Essentials waiting lists and guaranteed ascension directly to Her Challenge Courts upon death.

The snakes among the human worms once again betray their own kind by reporting to us the she-demon's latest activities. The nemesis has abandoned the front lines and traveled back to Tharn to aid the Green Lantern, who has been warring with Mordru in an apparent internal battle among the resistance forces. This treachery and strife among the worms clearly indicates they are being driven mad by the siren calls that have seduced them . . ."

Security breach. Converting to the next code in the sequence. Those responsible for the breach, both of the Khund army and the enemy's, are hereby sentenced to death.

Full content of this intercepted transmission has been forwarded to Laurel Gand. We've offered her and the child troops for protection but she protests that the troops cannot be spared. Unfortunately, she is correct.

